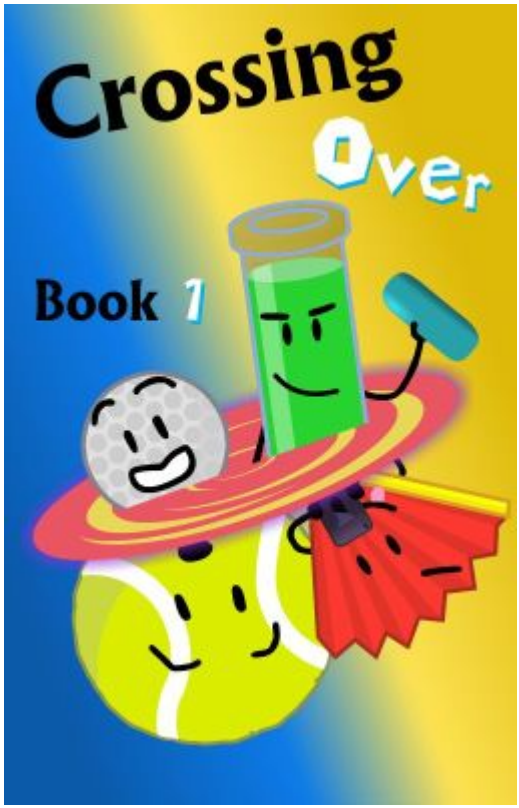

Crossing
Over
Book 1

"Who the heck are YOU?!"

(This takes place between II2 episodes 10 and 11.)

Click.

Clickety-clack.

Clickity-clackity-click-clackity-clack-clack-click-clickity-clack-click.

Clack.

It was late in the afternoon, and Test Tube had been typing away on her computer for hours. Her fingers felt like lead. She had lost three nights of sleep on this project. There were bags under her eyes, and several cans of soda were strewn across the lab messily, which wasn't like her. But she couldn't stop now. Calculating numbers, formulating theorems and hypotheses... She was close, closer than she had ever been to creating something that actually functioned, and functioned well.

But it could still go wrong. She could have made a mistake in her calculations, even though she triple-checked everything. She might not have enough power for the machine. The machine itself could be missing a vital part, or the wires might not be strong enough to handle the amount of power she would pump into it. Not to mention that what she was attempting was deemed impossible by scientists all around the world...

But she kept going anyway, her determination fueled by Dr Fizz. If she accomplished this, not only would she become one of the most well-known scientists in the world, but she could do... well, almost anything. The possibilities of this project were limitless if it succeeded.

She typed in the final numbers, looked over everything three times,

and saved it. The calculations were finally done. Now it was time to see whether she could pull this off.

Test Tube sat up, pushing away her swiveling office chair, and walked over to the large device she had set up in the middle of her laboratory. It looked like a giant laser that you might see in a mad scientist's laboratory. *Which is quite fitting,* Test Tube thought to herself. The machine was bolted to the floor and had several wires of all shapes and sizes running from it into the floor and ceiling. The controls were quite complicated, with lots of buttons and dials and switches and blinking lights. There was even an honest-to-gods giant lever on the side of the machine, once again, exactly like you would see like in a mad scientist's laboratory. The entire thing looked like it was ripped straight from Frankenstein, but instead of pointing at the ground, the laser was pointing at a target on the far wall.

Donning her goggles, Test Tube turned on the machine and started fiddling with the controls. The device began to make a noise, a constant hum that made everything vibrate slightly. It was subtle, almost unnoticeable. Test Tube hoped that if today's experiment worked, she would eventually be able to convert this clunky mess into something much smaller - say, a calculator.

She stepped away from the controls and was about to walk back to the computer when she heard a "Wheeeee!" Fan slid out of the tube leading to the soda machine on the surface. He popped up with a smile on his face. "Hey, Test Tube!"

"Hi, Fan..." Test Tube grumbled and crossed out the word 'Secret' on the white board that said 'Test Tube's Secret Laboratory.' "What do you want?"

Fan frowned. "Can't a friend and fellow teammate just say hi every now and then?"

"Not while I'm in the middle of my most important experiment EVER!" Then Test Tube stopped, and a smile formed on her face. This was actually fortunate! She would have an audience to see her experiment work, as well as someone to record it. "Actually, Fan, it's good that you're here."

"Really?"

"Yeah." She put her arm around Fan's shoulders *(or whatever, idk the anatomy of sentient objects)* and led him over to the computer. "You can be the first to witness my success!"

"Ooh, I love success. What do I have to do?"

"Don't touch anything," she replied firmly. "But you should pull out your phone and film this. We're about to make history." She chuckled at her accidental joke as she typed in the security code. A warning appeared on her screen, asking her if she wanted to continue. "Literally!"

She pressed 'yes.'

The humming of the machine suddenly rose in pitch as Fan fumbled with his phone. The vibration became more intense as various glass beakers started to fall off shelves and shatter on the floor, spilling brightly-colored chemicals everywhere. The machine began to shake too, electricity crackling off it like lightning.

Fan finally managed to turn the camera on. "Point it at that target!" Test Tube yelled over the humming, which was now deafening. Fan did so. "This is exciting!" He yelled back.

"What?"

"I said, this is-"

The humming and vibration stopped abruptly, as did the crackling of energy. "-exciting!" Fan yelled into the sudden silence, making them both wince.

Then the lights switched off, plunging them both into darkness, except for the light of the computer screen. But not a second later, a single beam of pink shot from the point of the laser and hit the center of the target perfectly. The energy formed from a straight beam into something else. In the time that it takes to breathe in, a swirling pink-and-yellow portal had formed where the target used to be. The laser was still shooting out a stream of color, keeping the portal open, and it lit up the laboratory with a lovely glow.

Fan slowly lowered his phone. "Whoa," he whispered in awe. He took a few steps towards the portal.

Test Tube was in shock and awe too. "I... I did it. I can't believe I actually did it."

They stood there for another moment, but Test Tube snapped out of it as she remembered a crucial detail that was missing. Turning back to the computer and pulling up her notes, she didn't notice the very slight draft that appeared, or that the fact that some of the soda cans had started to roll across the floor for seemingly no reason.

"This isn't right," Test Tube muttered as she scanned her notes again. "The color's all wrong."

"Uh, Test Tube?"

"Not now, Fan." She read her notes a third time to make sure she wasn't seeing things. "The portal's pink and yellow... but it's supposed to be green!"

"Test Tube?"

"Fan, just-"

"No! Look, Test Tube!"

Finally hearing the desperation in Fan's voice, she turned around and gasped. The portal was *sucking things into it.* Soda cans were rolling across the floor. More beakers were getting pulled off shelves and into the portal. Papers were flying everywhere. Even the heavy shelves were starting to slide across the floor ever so slightly.

Test Tube felt herself being pulled towards the portal and quickly grabbed a sturdy pipe on the wall. She looked back and reached out her hand for Fan, but he was already being sucked in. "Fan!"

"Test Tuuuuuuuube!" Fan's voice faded as he vanished into wherever the portal led to. Almost right after, somebody else popped out of the portal and rolled across the ground. "Fan?" Test Tube asked hopefully.

But it wasn't Fan. The object was round, white, and grey, and they had... dimples? They got up. The portal wind didn't seem to be affecting them. Test Tube locked eyes with them.

"Who the heck are YOU?!" they asked each other in unison.

But before either could answer, another unfamiliar object tumbled out of the portal. Then another, and another. Soon, several objects were filling up the room. Some were round, some were square, and some weren't any traditional shape.

The machine started to crackle with electricity again, much more violently this time. Test Tube saw what was coming and began to use the pipe to pull herself over to a large, orange button on the wall. With some difficulty, she lifted the glass covering and slammed her fist into it. She blinked out of existence, as did all the other sentient objects in the room.

Five seconds later, the laser exploded, and the portal closed.

If anyone is reading this, this is my first thing here, so I hope you like it :)

A visitor has arrived.

(This takes place during BFB 16.)

Pop! All that pulling finally payed off. Spongy popped out of the entrance to the EXIT and landed on top of Coiny and the others who were helping him out. They cheered, but Four quickly got back up. "You two demons need to go back to the EXIT!" Then he started scuttling like a crab towards Spongy and Loser.

"We gotta run!" Spongy cried.

"Yeah!" Loser agreed.

Then Four started to chase them in circles. Coiny sat down on the grass and watched them with amusement. "Silly number. Doesn't he know that he'll never catch up to them like that?"

Needle, who was next to him, shrugged. They watched for another moment before Four finally managed to grab them, Loser in his left hand and Spongy in his right. "Aha! Gotcha!"

Coiny rubbed his head. That was weird. He felt like they just missed something, something super important should have happened there. Something that would have changed the course of BFB forever...

"You ok?" Needle asked.

"Huh?" The feeling disappeared as quickly as it had come. "Oh, yeah, I'm fine. I guess I just drifted off." Needle had a concerned look on her face but didn't say anything else.

Four was still talking. "YOU will go back into the EXIT." He stuck Loser through the entrance. "As for you, Spongy... hmm... I know! I'll just kill you and not recover you until I figure out how to get you properly eliminated." Spongy started to spin around in Four's hand

until he looked like Pin did in episode 1 when the same thing happened - all twisted and mutilated. Coiny winced. He didn't need a reminder of Pin looking like that.

Four dropped Spongy's body and walked over to the rest of the contestants. "Right! Now, for the next contest-"

He was interrupted by a wooden target falling from the sky and hitting him on the head. Four fell over, then got back up right away, enraged. "Why do I KEEP getting INTERRUPTED??"

"What is THAT??" Firey yelled from behind Coiny. He looked up to see where the target had dropped from, and his mouth fell open. There was a swirling portal, colored pink and yellow, floating several feet above Four's head. Four looked up too, gasped, and backed away. "What is this abomination?"

"Needy... are you seeing this?" Coiny stuttered. He looked over and saw that Needle was so entranced, she didn't even slap him for calling her Needy. He looked around - everyone else was staring at the portal in awe as well.

Coiny looked back as a tiny breeze started. After a moment of silence, an empty soda can dropped from it. Then another.

Almost in a trance, Golf Ball slowly walked closer to the portal as the breeze picked up. It was getting stronger, but barely anyone seemed to notice. More soda cans dropped out of it, as well as some glass beakers and various papers. GB reached the portal and reached out her foot, as if to touch it. Of course, it was too high, but that didn't stop it from suddenly sucking her in like a vacuum. "AAAAAAAAA!!" Her scream faded to an echo.

If the others could have been more stunned, they would have. Then Coiny finally realized that the wind was blowing towards the portal. No, not blowing - it was being sucked in, like GB.

"It's like Black Hole!" Coiny yelled. "Everyone run!"

Everyone snapped out of it and started screaming and running either away from the portal or in circles. A bunch of people were too close

and got sucked in quickly. Pillow, TV, and Nickel went in at the same time, then Balloony right after. More and more objects got sucked in. The wind kept getting stronger, and Coiny felt like he was running against a wall, but he managed to grab a burnt tree trunk and hold on. He looked forward and saw Leafy flying through the air. He tried to grab her hand, but she was going too fast. "Leafy!" he cried, to no avail. She went through with the others.

He looked around. Four was somehow unaffected by the portal, but he was holding on to X. Everyone else seemed to have found an anchor now, except for Bell, but she was held back by her string. Besides her, Coiny was the closest.

Suddenly, he felt his tree shift. He looked down and saw the roots starting to rip away from the ground. "Nonononono- AAAAAAAAAA" He shouted as the tree gave way and fell into the portal. He slammed into Bell, and their combined weight plus the pulling of the portal caused the string to snap. They screamed in unison, but just before they would have hit the portal, it disappeared. They tumbled into the grass.

Coiny groaned and got up. He looked around. A lot of people were missing. Four and X were still here, and it seemed like most of the Losers had made it, but he could see several gaps in the groups of teams. Then he looked next to Four and jumped with surprise. In all the commotion, he hadn't noticed that someone had fallen through the portal *from the other side.*

He nervously walked up to the unknown person. They were a weird shape. They had two halves - both halves were triangular, but the top half was much larger than the bottom half. Their sides were yellow, but everything else was red. They looked like a fan - a foldable one that you would hold and fan yourself with, rather than an electric fan like Fanny. "Hello?"

The fan got up and pulled out his phone, seemingly not noticing Coiny. He shook it "Dangit! The battery's dead." He looked up at Coiny. "Hello! Who are-" The fan suddenly dropped his phone in astonishment. "Oh... you- you're-" He whipped around to look at Four and X. "And you're-" He turned his head again to look at everyone else. "And they're-! Could this be?" He did a full 360. "Yes! There are

the bathrooms! And Yoyle Mountain in the distance! I'm- I'm in nearby Yoyleland! Oh my word!" He clapped his hands to the side of his head, staring at everything in amazement.

"Uhhh..." Coiny was extremely confused. Out of the corner of his eye, he could see the others approaching. "You know us?"

The fan turned so fast again that Coiny worried he would get whiplash. "I do! Oh yeah, I'm Fan, by the way."

And then Fan fainted.

Introductions

"Heyyyy, Painty, I'm gonna go grab a Dr Fizz. Want one?"

Paintbrush waved their hand at Lightbulb in affirmation, not bothering to look up from their art project. "Yeah, sure."

Lightbulb grinned and skipped away merrily to find the drink machine that dispensed both bottles of water and Dr Fizz - "Everyone's favorite soft drink!" Well, it was sure Lightbulb's favorite. Humming a random tune, she darted through the trees, around one of those weird Easter-egg like things that popped up when season 2 started, and exited the forest.

She almost bumped into Baseball, who made no attempt to move out of the way. He had a grumpy look on his face. "Whoa there, Baseball! You're not looking too happy right now. I'm on my way to get me and Painty a Dr Fizz, do you want one to cheer you up?"

Baseball automatically opened his mouth to say no, but he paused, his face softening slightly. "Actually... that would be nice."

"Great! I'll be back soon!" She began to hum again and walked off. After a few minutes of wandering and somehow managing to loop back to the forest, she found the soda machine. "Perfect!" She pulled out three nickels and slotted them into the slot. "I'm glad Nickel can't see me right now, he wouldn't like me using his cousins like this," she said to herself. But before she could press any buttons, Test Tube popped into existence right next to her.

Lightbulb wasn't fazed. "Hiya, Test Tube! Wazzup?" She pressed a button and a Dr. Fizz popped out. She grabbed it and pressed the button again.

"No time, get away from the machine!" Test Tube grabbed Lightbulb's arm and pulled her away.

"What's all this ruckus about? I haven't even gotten all my sodas-" She was cut off as the ground rumbled and the ground beneath the soda dispenser caved into itself. It vanished into the depths of the ground. "Whoa, what the heck?"

Test Tube pulled off her goggles and looked around. "The 'others' should be here any second," she muttered to herself. "There would naturally be a bit of a delay from the Emergency Teleporter for such a large group-"

"What others?" Lightbulb queried. A large group of objects suddenly appeared in the air and fell on top of them, answering her question.

"Oof!"

"Ow!"

"My legs!"

"My arms!"

"My EVERYTHING!"

"Who poked me in the eye?"

"It was Donut!"

"It wasn't me, it was Gelatin!"

furious hand gestures from Teardrop

"Bleh!"

"Ew! Rocky barfed!"

"Gross!"

"Get away!"

Everyone in the pile spread out to get away from Rocky's vomit, then they all sat or lay down in exhaustion, panting. The portal had made them feel drained of energy for some reason. After a moment of relative silence, everyone stood up and looked around.

"So..." Fries finally spoke up. "Does anyone know where we are? Or WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED??"

"Well, obviously, we've been transported to another planet, since this landscape doesn't look like anywhere on Earth. Maybe even another universe?" Golf Ball's eyes drifted over to Test Tube and Lightbulb. "Perhaps you can tell us! Who are you and where are we?"

"Hi, new friends! I'm Lightbulb, and this is Test Tube. I don't know exactly where we are, either, so I guess we can just call this place 'my world!'"

Golf Ball harrumphed. But before she could say anything else, Leafy spoke up. "I think we should all introduce ourselves first. Hi, Lightbulb and Test Tube! I'm Leafy.

GB spoke again. "Leafy has a point. I'm Golf Ball. The others are Balloony, Bottle, Clock, Donut, Flower, Fries, Gelatin, Nickel, Pil-"

"Nickel?" Test Tube interrupted. "And Balloon, too?"

"It's Balloony, but yeah," Balloony replied.

Test Tube studied them like an interesting set of notes, which they didn't like. "Never mind. Carry on."

"Ohhhkayyyyy," Golf Ball grumbled. "There's also Pillow, Rocky, Ruby, Taco, Teardrop, and TV."

Gelatin waved. "Sup?" TV displayed a gif of a hand waving on his screen.

"Taco?" Lightbulb asked. "That name rings a bell..."

Taco backed up a step. "Why? I've never met you before."

Lightbulb shrugged. "I don't know, but my memory is sometimes a little fuzzy. It'll come back to me."

"Well, now that we have introductions out of the way-" Golf Ball turned to Test Tube. "Are you able to tell us how we got here?"

"Yes, actually, so listen up." Everyone turned towards her, and she suddenly felt a little stressed out. Usually she didn't speak in front of a crowd. She cleared her throat. "I believe you're all here because of a failed experiment of mine. This may sound crazy, but I tried to make a time machine."

Several objects started to talk at once.

"But that's impossible!"

"Not exactly, I-"

"Why would you do that? Do you know the damage it would cause?"

"Does that mean we're from the future? Or is *this* the future?"

The arguing continued for another moment until Test Tube yelled, "Everyone calm down and LISTEN!" After a few seconds passed, everyone shut up. "THANK you! To answer that question about the future, no, I'm positive the machine didn't transport you through time. The machine obviously malfunctioned, for one thing-" she gestured back at the ground where the soda machine had fallen through, "-and the color of the portal was all wrong, suggesting that it wasn't a portal through *time*..." She paused. "...but through *space*."

"So we are on another planet!" Golf Ball stopped. "Wait, what planet is this?"

"Earth."

"Another universe, then. Fascinating! This proves all my theories about the multiverse!"

"You're a scientist, too??"

Donut stepped between them. "Before you two get all buddy-buddy over quantum physics and whatnot, are we able to get back to our universe?"

Test Tube frowned. "Possibly, but my lab is wrecked. It will take several days to get it fixed. Assuming the data on my computer is safe, I should be able to get the machine working again."

"And if your data *isn't* safe," Golf Ball said, walking over next to Test Tube, "you now have a second scientist to help you calculate the proper formulas!"

"Yes!" Lightbulb shouted. "I can already tell you two are going to get along. High-five for new friends and teamwork!" Golf Ball just stared at her. "Oh right, you don't have hands. My bad." She lowered her hand. "Anyway, I'm going to go get those sodas-"

She turned and remembered that the soda machine was now underground. "-uh, never mind. In that case, I'm gonna go tell the others about you strange new creatures."

"Hey!" Pillow protested. "We're not strange! At least, some of us aren't."

Lightbulb shrugged. "Cya!" She skipped away to go spread the news.

"Alright! Test Tube and I are going to go fix her laboratory." Golf Ball gestured at TV. "TV, come with me. We might need a power source, and you can be helpful for some of the more complex calculations. Everyone else-" She turned to face the others. "Well, just, go do whatever, I guess."

"Not like we would have done anything else you told us to do," Flower muttered. She and Ruby, as well as the rest of the BFB contestants, turned and started to wander off. Some headed in the direction of the forest, while some went towards the lake in the distance. A couple even headed over to a strange hotel.

Some strange interactions were about to happen.

Reparation Preparations

Test Tube, Golf Ball, and TV reached the hole where the soda machine had been. Test Tube and GB carefully climbed down and started to move the rubble preventing them from reaching the lab while TV sat down on the rim of the hole and started to play Tic-Tac-Toe with Teardrop, who had followed them.

"So, uhh..." Test Tube spoke up. "Tell me about your universe."

Golf Ball stared at her but didn't reject the offer. "Well... there's 64 of us. Or at least, there were. See, we're in this competition called 'Battle For BFDI', hosted by two beings called Four and X..."

The more GB spoke about BFB, the more and more it sounded familiar to Test Tube. Not only the competition part, as Test Tube and the others were doing something very similar, but the objects that GB spoke of - they were ringing several bells in her head. She felt that Fan would somehow know more-

She froze. Fan! She completely forgot about him getting sucked into the portal! How could she do that?

"Golf Ball," Test Tube said urgently, interrupting the dimpled sphere, "did you see anyone come out of the portal from *this* side?"

GB looked annoyed to be interrupted. "No, but I was the first one to go through. Maybe one of the others saw someone come out."

"Alright." They continued clearing rubble in silence for another few minutes until Golf Ball cried out, "I think I found an entrance!"

Test Tube turned, and indeed, GB had found a shaft leading to darkness that neither of them could fit through. But moving a particularly large piece of concrete allowed them both entry.

Test Tube picked up a flashlight from the floor and turned it on. She gasped. Everything was in ruin. The walls and floor were mostly intact, but they were cracked, and most of the ceiling was caved in. Every single shelf was knocked over, and the beakers that had survived the portal were now smashed on the ground. Papers were ripped to shreds, wood was splintered, and the swivel chair had been chopped in half by a steel girder, although the sink was somehow intact. The machine itself was a wreck. The control panel was completely gone except for the giant lever (those things seemed to be unbreakable) and most of the wires had simply been severed. A couple were shooting sparks. And just to add insult to injury, there was somehow a tree sticking out of one of the walls.

Test Tube stared at the wreckage and felt weak. She had avoided thinking about her lab for the past half hour, but now that she was seeing the damage done, it all came crashing down to her. "My... my beautiful lab..." She sat down and let the flashlight drop from her hands. The beam landed on an untouched box of cylindrical crystals in various colors, and they reflected the beam like a prism, shooting colors around the room. But Test Tube didn't care how beautiful it looked.

"Hey. Look at me." Test Tube glanced at Golf Ball, who had a determined look on her face. "We WILL fix your lab, repair your machine, and get your friend back. Preferably while also sending me and the others back to our universe."

Test Tube blinked and stood up, her expression hardening. "You're right." She looked around again, this time assessing the damage. Some things were beyond repair, but mostly everything could be fixed. "We can do this."

They heard a scrape and turned around. TV was halfway through the hole in the wall, but had gotten stuck. There was a :(on his screen. Behind him, Teardrop rolled her eyes.

"But first," sighed Golf Ball, "I suppose we should widen the hole so that TV can fit through."

Paintbrush was just finishing their collage when they heard someone running up to them. They turned to find a breathless Lightbulb panting away next to them. "Oh, hey Lightbulb." They looked at Lightbulb's empty hands. "Uh, I thought you said you were going to get a Dr Fizz."

Lightbulb took a deep breath before answering in a flurry of words. "WellIWASgoingtogogetusDrFizzesbutIonlygotonethenthesodamachinecollapsedundergroundafterTestTubeappearedfromthinairandshewasall'Comewithmeifyouwanttolive'whichwasAWESOMEandthentheseotherpeoplefromanotheruniverseappearedandsoIgavetheoneDrFizzIhadtoBaseballandcameovertotellyouandtheothersaboutthemandhereIam!"

She took another deep breath, but Paintbrush put their hand over her mouth. "Wait wait wait. The soda machine *collapsed?* And what's all this nonsense about people from another universe?"

An unfamiliar object peeked out from behind Lightbulb and startled Paintbrush. "Ahh! Who is THAT?!"

"Mm mmmm mmm m mmmm mm."

Paintbrush took their hand off Lightbulb's mouth.

"This is Jar! She's from another universe. Wait, no, that's not her name..." Lightbulb snapped her fingers. "Bottle! That was it. This is Bottle."

Bottle waved. "Hiya!"

"Hi," Paintbrush replied nervously. "Lightbulb, can we talk in private for a second?" Without waiting for an answer, they grabbed Lightbulb's arm and pulled her out of earshot. "Are you sure we can trust her, and those other new objects? They might be dangerous."

"Oh, please," Lightbulb scoffed. "I doubt any of them can withstand your temper. Besides, they all seem like nice people! Well, except for maybe that Petal person. Wait, I got the name wrong again..."

Paintbrush looked over Lightbulb's shoulder to Bottle, who seemed to be admiring their collage. *Well, I suppose it doesn't hurt to give them a chance,* they thought.

They walked back over. Lightbulb elbowed Paintbrush and said, "Look at us. At the beginning of the season, *I* was the one warning you to beware strangers. Oh, how we've changed..."

Paintbrush smiled a little. They reached Bottle and stuck out their hand. "I'm Paintbrush."

Bottle shook it. "Nice to meet you, Paintbrush! I'm Bottle!"

"Yeah, Lightbulb already said that."

Bottle turned back to Paintbrush's art. "Is this yours? I really like it!"

"Thank you!" Painty blushed. Lightbulb was the only other one who had ever complimented their art, but Lightbulb liked everything.

Bottle continued. "Back in my universe, I've got a friend who's also a good drawer. His name is Black Hole!"

"Black... Hole?" Paintbrush stuttered. "You've got a friend who's a *black hole?*"

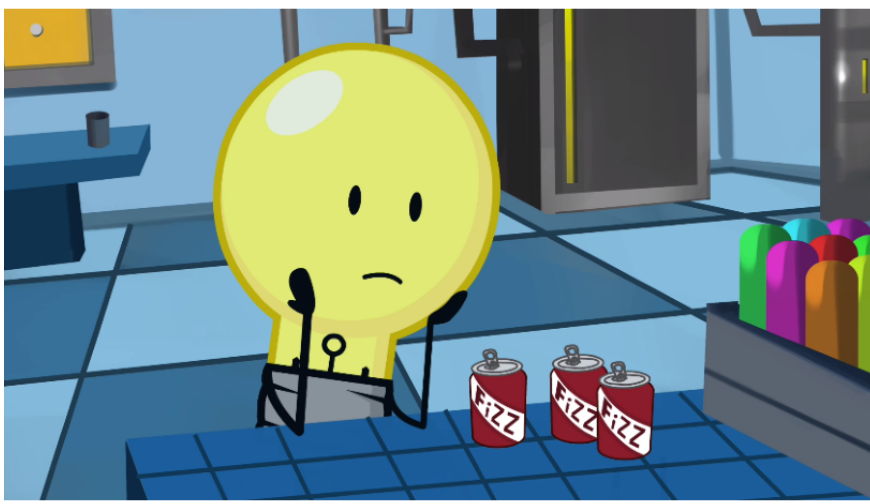
"Is he a cool guy? Or does he *suck?*" Lightbulb wiggled her eyebrows at her joke. Paintbrush just slapped her.

"Black Hole's actually really good at preventing death! There was this one time..." Bottle rattled on for a while.

Lightbulb leaned over to Paintbrush and whispered from the corner of her mouth, "I'm not sure she's all there."

Paintbrush leaned back. "Just like you, then." Lightbulb stuck her tongue out at them.

If anyone wonders what the crystals are, I'm talking about these weird things we see in II episode 12



Maybe they'll be important later :)

Doppelgangers

"Urg..." Fan groaned. He felt really drained of energy for some reason. Why was he lying down? Then he remembered the portal and opened his eyes. Coiny, Book, and Tennis Ball were standing over him, looking concerned. He sat up and saw that everyone else was in a circle around him, watching him. "What happened?" he asked.

"You just fainted," Coiny replied, "but you were only out for a few minutes. You ok?"

"Yeah, I'm fine, I just feel really tired." Then Fan remembered where he was, and suddenly, he didn't feel tired anymore. He shot to his feet, causing everyone to take a step back in surprise. "Wow! I can't believe I'm actually here! Once again, I'm Fan-" he grabbed Book's hand and shook it, "-and it's awesome to meet you all!"

He felt himself being picked up and turned around, and suddenly he was staring into the angry eyes of Four. "What did you do with my contestants?" he screeched.

Fan cringed. "Ah! Please don't zap me! I don't know what happened to your-" He stopped as an idea dawned on him. "Actually... did your contestants go through the portal I came out of?"

"Yes."

"Then that means they're in my world! You don't need to worry, then - if anyone can get them back here, it's my friend Test Tube. She's a great scientist, and I've seen her do some amazing experiments!"

"How long will it take?"

Fan shrugged. "I don't know! I'm not a scientist." Four dropped him.

Tennis Ball spoke up. "But you DO know about us. How?"

"Oh, that's easy." Fan pulled out his phone, but then remembered that it was dead. "You guys are a show on Youtube! I'm a big fan."

Several people groaned. Fan continued. "I didn't know you guys were real, though!"

"You say you're a viewer?" Snowball crossed his arms. "I don't believe you."

"Four said that the viewers were in a different world from us," said Gaty, "and weren't able to do anything other than vote."

"It's true!" Fan protested.

"Then prove it."

"Ask me a question about the show."

Snowball thought for a moment. "Who was the first person I invited to my team?"

"Lightning," Fan answered immediately.

Cloudy butted in. "Who's my best friend?"

"Balloony."

"Who's *my* best friend?" This one came from Foldy.

"Stapy."

This went on for a few minutes until Four finally screeched, making everyone cringe. "ENOUGH! Everyone, go... away! X and I need to decide what to do about the missing contestants."

"Are you going to get them back?" Book asked worryingly.

"As I SAID," Four replied, more angry now, "X and I will decide what to do once you CREATURES are out of earshot! Now, shoo!"

People started to mumble and walk away. A couple looked at Fan weirdly but didn't say anything.

Fan walked up to Tennis Ball. "Hey, my phone's dead. Do you know if Golf Ball's laboratory has a phone charger?"

TB stared at him. "How did you know-? Oh, right. I think it does, but almost nobody here uses a phone."

"Life without a phone?? How do you guys... well, live??"

TB rolled his eyes. "There are other ways to enjoy life, you know."

Taco wandered around the edge of the forest, alone. She was admiring the terrain. She passed the mouth of a cave which had beautiful crystals sparkling inside. The landscape in BFB had a mountain in the background, but it wasn't much compared to the mountain range here. And she had no clue what those giant, cylindrical pillars sticking out of the ground were - they looked like elongated Easter eggs - but she loved them. *Man, if only BFB took place here,* she thought.

Suddenly, she saw a figure emerge from the trees a little ways ahead of her. He appeared to be a kitchen knife of some sort.

Taco picked up her pace. She reached the unknown person in a matter of seconds and greeted herself. "Hi! I'm Taco. I'm not from around here. Who are you?"

The knife swiveled around much quicker than Taco thought he would. He glared at her. "YOU!"

Her smile vanished and she took a step back. "Uh, hi."

"A lot of nerve YOU have, coming back around here after last season! And don't think I wouldn't recognize you just because you have a new fish."

She took another step back. "I don't know what you're-"

"Oh, yes you do," the knife continued. "Don't play dumb! You showed us your *true* personality in front of everyone at the end of last season. Do you have some sort of new plan to steal this season's prize, huh? I

don't know why you came back, but you're not welcome here anymore!"

He began walking towards her, but Taco simply turned and fled into the forest. "Yeah, that's right! And don't come back!" His words echoed into the trees.

Knife huffed once Taco was out of sight. He couldn't believe she came back, after all this time. She seemed different, but it wasn't like he cared. He turned around to find two unfamiliar objects staring at him. "Uh, who are you?"

"Hi!" The shiny red object waved at him. "I'm Ruby, and this is my friend, Flower! We're from another universe!"

Knife scoffed. "I seriously doubt that."

"Why would you?" Flower asked, a dangerous tinge of defiance in her voice.

"What, do you seriously think that I'd believe a far-fetched story of people from another universe? Get real."

"Well, that's where we come from, so I think that makes *us* a little more educated about other universes than *you,* Slicey Boi," Flower retorted.

"Don't EVER call me Slicey Boi!" Knife growled.

Flower growled right back. "Would you rather I call you something worse?" The tension was so thick, Knife could feel his blade cutting through it every time he moved his head.

"Hey, whoa, maybe we should all just settle down," Ruby said. She dragged Flower away from Knife. "Let's go find some other people to talk to, ok?"

Knife watched them go and rubbed his forehead, where a sudden headache had blossomed. What a day...

Taco only stopped running when she reached a clearing with a tree stump in the middle. She collapsed on the stump, breathing heavily. What was wrong with her? She wasn't usually one to run away like that. But something about Knife had unnerved her. He looked like he had seen her before...

She sat up on the stump properly and allowed herself to catch her breath. A couple minutes later, she hopped off and was about to trundle through the trees again - hopefully she wouldn't get lost - when a tall figure stumbled through the bushes and into the clearing. Taco almost ran after seeing that they were grey all over, but realized that this wasn't Knife. It looked as if it was a microphone.

"Oh, hey Taco!" The microphone looked a little nervous. "I guess you're a little early."

"...hi," Taco replied hesitantly.

"I, uh, like your new fish."

"Thanks?"

"What did you want to talk to me about?" Taco didn't say anything, so Microphone continued. "Is it about Baseball, Balloon, Suitcase, and Nickel? There seems to be something going on between those four. Maybe we can use it to our advantage?"

She looked at Taco, clearly waiting for an answer. "Who's... Baseball?" Taco asked.

Microphone frowned. "You know who Baseball is. You competed with him last season, didn't you?"

"Look, I think you've got the wrong person."

"Of course I don't! There's only one Taco." Microphone put her hands on her hips. "Although, you *are* acting kind of strangely. Did your accent change?"

"Who's acting kind of strangely?" A voice with a British accent emerged from the bushes, and so did the person speaking. It was, of course, Taco. "And who are you talking-"

She spotted the other Taco and froze. They locked eyes, staring at each other from a distance, not saying a word.

Doppelgangers, part 2

Balloony, Nickel, Rocky, and Clock were walking towards a large lake in the distance. They could see a couple unfamiliar figures in the distance, but the group couldn't make out what objects they were as they were obscured by some bushes.

"...and it turns out that they had forgotten me for five whole episodes," Clock explained. "All of them... except, I suppose, Leafy, who probably didn't even know about me."

Balloony and Nickel were silent for a moment as they processed Clock's story of his team's forgetfulness. Rocky was silent because he always was.

Nickel finally spoke up. "I'm sure your team will come around. Cake, Eggy, and Firey seem decent enough, and I know from my BFDIA experience that Coiny, Needle, and Pin are good people." He paused. "Although, I'm... not sure what to think about Leafy."

Balloony frowned at the mention of the lemon leaf. "Well, I'm still not a fan of her."

Clock didn't say anything for a moment. Then: "Thank you for listening, guys."

Rocky went "Mm-hm!" and Nickel said, "Of course, m'dude! Us armless people gotta look out for each other." Clock smiled a little.

After another few minutes of silence, they had almost reached the lake. From the bushes ringing part of the shore, they could see the tops of two figures poking out - someone red, and someone grey. But nobody knew who anybody was until the group from BFB broke through the bushes.

Balloony waved his hand in greeting. "Hello there!" Then he stopped

in his tracks, as did the other three.

There was another balloon. *And another nickel.*

The two nickels stared at each other. "Who are *you?*" they said simultaneously. "I'm Nickel!" Once again, at the same time. "No, *I'm* Nickel. Stop copying me! No, *you* stop!"

"What the-" Balloony started to say, but stopped, as the red balloon - who was stringless - spoke at the same time as him. "Hey! Stop that!"

Clock slapped his forehead with his foot. "Cut that out!"

"Tell HIM to cut it out!" All four of them shouted at once, each pointing to their respective clone. They were shouting now.

"Ok, everybody, SHUT UP!" Clock yelled. "I'm getting a headache." He pointed at BFB Nickel. "Let's call you Nickel 1, and let's call the other guy Nickel 2. Same goes for both Balloonys."

"Actually," the red balloon squeaked in his Mickey Mouse voice, "I'm just Balloon."

"Well, now that we have that sorted out-" II Nickel turned to face BFB Nickel. "-mind telling us where you guys are from?"

"Another universe, believe it or not."

"Bull."

"It's true!" Balloony protested. "Go ask some girl named Test Tube if you want the details."

"No, thanks. I don't generally talk with people who aren't in my team."

"Team?" Clock inquired.

II Nickel opened his mouth to reply but got interrupted by Balloon. "Yeah! We're on the second season of this show called 'Inanimate Insanity.' Me, Nickel, and seventeen others - at least it *was* seventeen - are competing in teams for an awesome prize."

"Hey, so are we!" Balloony exclaimed. "Competing in a battle for a prize, I mean."

"What a coincidence." II Nickel rolled his eyes. "How many people are in *your* show?"

"Sixty-four."

"Sixty-four!" Balloon's jaw dropped open. "Golly, that's a lot!"

"This is so weird," BFB Nickel muttered. He was studying II Nickel. "You look so much like me!"

"That's because we're both nickels, you dolt."

"You even SOUND like me!" BFB Nickel frowned. "Although I don't think we have the same personality."

"No, YOU sound like ME!"

"Same difference."

While the doppelgangers chatted amongst themselves, Clock let his eyes drift to a dock on the far side of the lake. A brown, rectangular figure with yellow stripes and some sort of handle was sitting on the edge of it. They looked sad. Clock decided to investigate and wandered away from the rest of the group.

Nobody noticed him go...

"Hey, who's this little guy?" Balloon asked, gesturing towards Rocky.

"Oh, him? That's little o- er, I mean, Rocky," Balloony stuttered. "He doesn't talk. Or do much of anything, really, except barf."

II Nickel made a face. "We had someone like that in the first season. Armless, didn't talk much, and when she did, it was nonsense. She even barfed up an occasional lemon... turns out that she was faking it all as a strategy to get to the finale."

They all turned and looked at Rocky, who sat there with a large, innocent grin on his face.

"Nah," Balloony scoffed. "Rocky would never do something like that." He paused. "...at least, I don't think so."

Rocky's grin simply grew in size.

Both Tacos stared at each other for a solid ten seconds, frozen. BFB Taco was the first to make a move, taking two steps towards her clone. II Taco repeated the action. Then they began to slowly circle each other.

"This is..." BFB Taco shook her head. "Well, crazy. Am I hallucinating?"

"I think we're both in our right mind here," replied II Taco. "Only question is, where are you from?"

"A place called Nearby Yoyleland, in another universe."

"Incredible!" They continued to circle in silence for a moment.

"You're like..." BFB Taco struggled to find the words. "You're like a cooler me!"

"Why thank you, I try."

"And with an awesome accent!"

"Oh, stop it." II Taco smiled and beamed slightly. "I must admit, I admire your fish."

"Thanks!"

"Are you soft-shelled? I've always wondered what it's like to be flexible."

Microphone spoke. "I think my brain is going to overload from weirdness. What the heck is going on?"

"Isn't it obvious?" II Taco stopped walking. "This lovely lady here who happens to look like me has said she is from a different universe. To

be fair though, my own mind is reeling a little bit. Imagine the possibilities of what parallel universes could bring!"

"Well, I don't know if our universes are *parallel,* exactly. We don't have a Microphone where I come from." BFB Taco quickly explained Four's competition and how she got sucked through Test Tube's portal.

"Interesting," II Taco muttered. "I wonder if she'll be able to recreate that portal? I'd LOVE to visit another world."

"That's what she and Golf Ball are working on now. But what about your side of the story? Fill me in on the juicy secrets of this universe." She sat down on the tree stump again.

"One second." II Taco's arms disappeared into her shell for a moment, and when they emerged, she had a teapot in her left hand, and a teacup in her right. "Tea?"

"No thanks. I prefer coffee."

II Taco shrugged and poured herself a cup. "Suit yourself." Then she explained Inanimate Insanity 2 to BFB Taco. However, she left out the parts of herself helping Microphone, and filled her role as a simple spectator.

"Well then," said BFB Taco as her doppelganger finished, "I guess our universes are more parallel than I thought."

"Indeed." II Taco pulled out a watch from inside her shell, checked it, and tutted. "Dear, me. I'm afraid I have to go. Business calls."

"Oh. Well, it was good meeting you!"

"Likewise." BFB Taco hopped off the tree stump once again and was about to head into the forest when her doppelganger called out, "Oh, a word of advice: there are some people you may want to avoid. I'm afraid that I don't have the best... er, *reputation* with the contestants."

"Tell me about it. My team doesn't really trust me right now..."

"Anyway, there's one person in particular you should avoid. His name

is Knife, and he's a bit of a bully."

"Tall, sharp, and dangerous?" BFB Taco scoffed. "Yeah, already met him. I'm not a fan."

The other taco winced. "Sorry about that. But I'd recommend befriending Lightbulb - she's the least likely to hate you - and of course, Microphone here, who I'm pals with." Mic jumped a little when she heard that.

"Well, thank you!" BFB Taco waved and headed off through the trees.

II Taco *(who I will now refer to as just "Taco" again)* watched her go. Once she was out of sight, Mic spoke. "That was... really weird. Also, are we *actually* friends?"

"Of course not. This relationship is simply business." Microphone looked relieved and offended at the same time. "Now, I think we have bigger problems."

"Huh?"

"I WAS going to talk to you about Baseball's alliance..." Taco thought of Test Tube. How she opened a portal and brought several people here. How Test Tube could use this portal to have a serious advantage.

"...but I believe we should focus on eliminating Test Tube next."

Phew, that's a bit more lengthy then I thought it would be, but I'm pretty happy with it :)

Edit: I can't believe I published this and forgot to add a title LMAOOO

Mysterious Ways

Fan and Tennis Ball emerged from the stairwell into Golf Ball's underground factory. "Wow!" Fan exclaimed. "This place is so... BIG!" He shouted the last word so that it echoed. "Much bigger than it looks in the videos!" He took a sniff. "And it smells like... lavender? Man, there's a lot of things the videos don't show you."

"Yeah, the smell in here isn't always great, so Golf Ball likes to cover it up with lavender incense." TB clammed up. "Er, don't tell anyone else I said that! Golf Ball would hate it if people knew she likes lavender."

Fan did the gesture of zipping his mouth shut, but he was already thinking of posting it on his blog.

They reached the bottom of the stairs and Tennis Ball pulled out a cardboard box labelled "Misc. electronics." He rustled around in there for a bit while Fan admired the factory. "I'm surprised most of the stuff in here survived the lavapocalypse of episode 14."

Tennis Ball pulled out something that looked like a wall teleporter, then tossed it away. "Golf Ball's a good scientist and mechanic. Her creations are usually super durable. Ah! Found it!" Tennis Ball pulled out an iPhone charger, then glanced at Fan's MePhone. "Uh, it might not fit."

"Only one way to find out." Fan snatched the charger from TB, plugged one end into the wall, and the other into his phone. After sitting there for a minute in awkward silence, the Meeple logo appeared on Fan's phone, and it turned on. "Yes!" He grabbed his phone to make sure everything was alright.

"While you check... whatever social medias you have, I'm going to go see if I can find a way to reopen that portal." Without looking, Fan gave a thumbs up and TB walked off.

Fan scrolled through his list of apps. He was about to check his blog when he spotted his contacts. *Hmm,* he thought. *I wonder...*

A warning flashed on TV's screen, advising Golf Ball not to move the pile rubble she was about to move, as shifting it would cause more of the unstable roof to collapse. She quickly stepped away and moved to a different pile. "Thanks, TV."

Looking around, they had made impressive progress. About three fourths of the rubble had been cleared out, and most of the shelves had been put back, but there was still quite a mess on the ground. Test Tube had gone to borrow a broom from someone to sweep away all the dust that covered everything. *At this rate, we'll be finished cleaning up by tomorrow,* she calculated. Then she stood up and bonked her head on the tree embedded in the wall. "Ow!" She rubbed her head with her foot. *I forgot that was there...*

Out of the corner of her eye, GB spotted Teardrop climbing back in through the hole in the wall and beginning to pick up large pieces of broken glass. After a moment of internal debate, she walked over to her and spoke. "Hey," Golf Ball said. TD ignored her. "Look, I... I know I haven't treated you the best in the past. And you're probably not the biggest fan of me. So I was wondering... why are you helping us out, if that's the case?"

Teardrop dumped the broken glass on the counter and started making hand gestures. "I don't know sign language, TD," Golf Ball said. TD rolled her eyes, grabbed a relatively clean sheet of paper and a pen, and wrote something. *The faster this place is cleaned, the sooner I get to go home,* it said. Golf Ball sighed. "Yeah, I want to go home, too..."

Teardrop carefully picked up the shards of glass again and walked over to the trash can. "Well, for what it's worth, Teardrop, I..." The words were hard to say. She had very little practice. "I wanted to say thank you. For helping out." Teardrop dumped the shards in the trash and turned to face GB. "I really appreciate the extra pair of hands... especially since, you know, I don't have any."

"Did somebody mention hands?"

All three of them jumped. Test Tube was poking her head in through the hole in the lab, holding a dustpan. "Or, more specifically, arms? Because you just reminded me of something that I think you'd like." She put down the dustpan and walked over to a box on one of the shelves. "I created these a while ago, but never used them because nobody on my team is armless." She unlatched the box and pulled out a pair of mechanical arms. "But I thought maybe you could wear them."

Golf Ball gasped. "No way. How did you discover the bonding agent between the arms and the object? Tennis Ball and I have tried to make prosthetic limbs several times, but we were never able to succeed."

There it was again - the nagging sense of familiarity that occurred whenever Golf Ball mentioned someone she knew. But Test Tube pushed that aside for now. "It's actually a lot simpler than you'd think. The key-" Test Tube's eyes twinkled with something GB couldn't quite identify. "- is cheese."

"*Cheese??*"

"Cheese has so many scientific properties that nobody ever thinks about! But I'll show you my notes later." Test Tube held the right arm to GB's right side and said, "This may hurt a little."

Before GB could process what that *really* meant, Test Tube pressed a button on the arm. Golf Ball jumped. "Ow!"

"Sorry! But that was necessary. The arm is currently bonding with your nervous system, making connections that weren't there before. In a moment, you should be able to completely control the arm." They watched with anticipation, and the arm beeped. "Try it out!"

Golf Ball lifted her arm, gently at first, then faster and faster as she tested out all her joints. "Wow." She was speechless. "This is just... incredible! You're an amazing scientist!"

"Aw, shucks."

Then GB winced. "The part where the arm is connected is sore,

though..."

"Oh, that's normal. The soreness will go away after an hour or so. But..." She held up the left arm. "You still gotta put this one on." Golf Ball groaned.

Suddenly, a faint ringing noise emitted from somewhere in the room. It took Test Tube a moment to place the sound. "My phone! I must have left it here when the room collapsed!" She tossed the left arm to GB, who caught it with her right arm, then looked surprised with herself. "You know what to do!"

Test Tube dug through the rubble until she found her phone. "It's Fan!" She quickly accepted the call. "Hello?"

"TEST TUUUUUUUBE!" Fan was so loud, Test Tube had to hold the phone away from here ear. "Are you ok? What happened? What was that experiment supposed to do?"

Test Tube chuckled. "Good to hear from you too, Fan. I'm fine - I managed to get out of the laboratory before it collapsed."

"Oh no. Your laboratory *collapsed?!*"

"Yeah, but my experiments are intact." She winced inwardly as she remembered the machine that opened the portal. "Well, most of them. What about you?"

"You won't believe this. I've been transported to the world of BFB!"

"BFB?" Test Tube scratched her head. "Is that the place where Golf Ball is from? Actually, hold on - if we're in different universes, how are you calling me?"

Although Test Tube couldn't see it, Fan shrugged. "The Internet works in mysterious ways."

"Golf Ball's there?" That was a new voice that Test Tube had never heard before. "Can I speak to her?"

"Sure, lemme put my phone on speaker." She pressed a button and turned to GB, who had gotten the left arm attached. "Golf Ball,

someone wants to talk to you."

"Hello? GB, are you there?"

"Tennis Ball!" GB grabbed the phone with her new arms. She was overjoyed to hear his voice.

"Golf Ball! Are you hurt?"

"Not at all. In fact, I feel amazing! I've met someone called Test Tube - she's a scientist, too - and she made me robot arms! It feels so weird to have *fingers*. Also, I'm in another universe!! Can you believe that?"

"I can, actually," TB replied. "Fan's from the place you are right now. Hey, did you know that Fan's a viewer of BFB?"

"Fan? Who's that?"

"That would be the friend I mentioned earlier," Test Tube piped up. Then she slapped her forehead. "Oh, of COURSE! Fan showed me an episode of BFB recently. THAT'S why all the things you told me sounded familiar, Golf Ball!"

"Anyway," TB said, "I'm going to try to reopen the portal using your underground factory."

"Which is AWESOME!" Fan chimed in.

"Hey! Stay out of my factory, Fan! And don't tell anyone about the lavender incense!"

Lavender? Test Tube thought.

TV suddenly came over next to Golf Ball and said in a monotone voice, "Hello there, Tennis Ball! It is TV. Teardrop and I say hi."

"Hi, TV! Hi, TD!"

An unknown voice suddenly filtered through the phone, but Test Tube and Golf Ball couldn't hear what it was saying. "We gotta go," Fan said. "Four's summoning everyone for a meeting. I'll call you back soon, Test Tube!"

"Wait!" But Fan had already hung up.

"Alright, MePad! It's time to start the next episode. What have the viewers decided about the contest?"

MePad displayed the votes, which determined that the Bucket Brigade contest had won the voting. "Perfect! Now, let's go gather the Bright Lights for the elimination."

"Sir, there's something important you should know before we start."

MePhone scoffed. "Could it really be more important then the competition?"

"Yes, actually. It appears that objects from another universe have somehow managed to make their way to ours, and are now interacting with the contestants."

MePhone was intrigued. "Objects from a different universe? *This* I gotta see."

Man, these chapters just keep getting longer and longer, don't they

Telling Your Stories

Knock knock knock. Leafy rapped on the door of the building labelled "Hotel OJ."

"Ok, Gelatin," Donut said. "Remember: we're about to meet some new people, so you're to be on your *best* behavior."

"Yeah!" Fries agreed. "I don't want to see you pushing people out of windows, or anything."

"Aw, come on! You guys are no fun."

"There's a difference between 'fun' and pulling too many pranks. And NO forks! Got it?" Fries poked his finger in Gelatin's face.

"Yes, *dads,*" Gelatin replied sarcastically. Donut slapped him.

They heard footsteps from inside, and the door began to open. "What is it *this* time?" Then the door opened all the way, revealing a glass of orange juice. They all stood there for a moment, taking each other in. "Well, *you're* not MePhone," the drink said. "Who are you?"

Leafy grabbed the orange juice's hand and shook it. "Hi! My name's Leafy. This is Donut, Gelatin, and Fries. We're, uh... not from around here. We were just passing by, but our ride broke down, so we decided to explore and make new friends! May we come in?"

"Uh, sure, I'm Orange Juice, by the way." He let go of the doorknob and stepped back. "Welcome to my hotel!" Leafy and the others walked in to find a mostly empty hallway with orange wallpaper. OJ lead them around a corner, past a couch where a pickle was sitting, playing something on a Wii console. Without looking, the pickle waved at them and said "Heyo."

"Hey, Pickle," OJ responded. Gelatin spotted a bomb lying in the

corner of the room, passed out, and his eyes sparkled. But before he could say anything, OJ lead them into a kitchen. Gelatin spotted a coffee machine half-full with coffee and poured himself a cup, but Donut snatched the mug away. "No caffeine for you! You're hyper enough as it is." He passed the coffee to Fries, who sipped it with relish.

"Aw." Gelatin opened the fridge to find something else.

"Help yourselves," OJ said. "How many of you guys are there? I need to know if I have enough empty rooms for you guys."

"There's us and twelve others, but we're not sure if we'll be here overnight," Donut responded.

"And even if you don't have enough rooms, that's ok!" Leafy exclaimed. "I enjoy sleeping under the stars."

"Me too!" Gelatin and Leafy high-fived.

"Come over here." OJ waved them to the adjacent dining room, where there was a table for them to sit at. They left Gelatin behind to rummage through the fridge and sat down together. "Now," OJ said, "when people come to stay at a hotel, I require a price."

"We don't have any money," Fries said.

"Oh, no, I don't mean money. I mean stories! Whenever people get eliminated from Inanimate Insanity - this game show that some of my friends are competing in - I always ask them what happened. Even though I don't compete anymore, I still like to hear the twists and... turns..." He stopped to look at Gelatin, who had rejoined them, munching on a snack. "Is that... barbecue sauce on *cheddar cheese?*"

"Yeah, so?" Gelatin said a through a mouthful of the stuff.

"That is DISGUSTING!" Donut said, angry.

Gelatin swallowed. "Hey, I don't diss what *you* eat." He spread his arms out wide. "And you would not BELIEVE the scientific properties that cheese has! Besides, it's not like I put pineapple on pizza or anything."

Fries, being a secret lover of pineapple pizza, stayed silent.

"Anyway," OJ continued, slightly put off, " as I was saying, I still like to hear about the twists and turns that the host, MePhone, thinks up."

"That sounds pretty similar to something that's happening where we come from." And, taking turns with the others, Leafy began to tell OJ about BFB, starting from episode 1.

Suitcase was sitting at the edge of the dock, absently splashing her feet in the water when she heard someone behind her say, "Hi."

She turned to see an unfamiliar object standing there. "Who are you?" She asked.

"My name is Clock. I saw from across the lake that you looked... unhappy. May I sit down?"

"Uh, sure." She scooted over a little to give him some room. He sat down. "I'm Suitcase, by the way."

"I know I'm a total stranger, and you have no reason to trust me, but I'm... well, I'm kind of looking for a new start. I want to meet new people. And, assuming your unhappiness is related to your team, I may be able to relate."

Suitcase looked a little surprised. "You know about the competition?"

"Yeah, Nickel told me. We have something very similar happening where I come from."

"Nickel..." Suitcase pouted, which told Clock a lot. "He's the reason I'm unhappy..." And she told Clock all that had happened with her alliance and Balloon since the first episode of II2.

Clock was silent for a while as he processed all of the information he was given. "This is a tricky situation," he said at last. "To be honest, I don't know if I have any good advice for that."

"That's ok," Suitcase responded. "It felt good to get that off my chest,

at least. What about you?"

Clock scoffed and kicked away some water with his foot. "Well, my team went right up and FORGOT me. I died in episode 10, and they didn't remember to recover me until episode 15!"

Suitcase winced. "Sorry to hear that."

"There is *one* person who I can't really blame, since she joined my team after I died and didn't know I existed, but she's got an... interesting history. I'm not sure if I can trust her."

Suitcase stayed quiet for a moment. "I don't really know what to say, either."

"As you said, though, I guess it's good to just get things like this off our chests every now and then."

"Yeah."

"Cmon, cmon..." Paintbrush rolled the dice and moved their piece, landing on some of Bottle's property.

"Yes!" Bottle cheered. "Bankruptcy for you! Looks like I win this game."

"Wha-" Paintbrush spluttered. "How did you manage to bankrupt all *three* of us?" Paintbrush, Lightbulb, Bottle, and Taco (from BFB) were playing Monopoly together. Bottle had, obviously, just won.

"Well," Bottle responded, flicking Paintbrush's piece off the board, "I'm a little smarter than I look. I also have better hearing than most." She winked at Paintbrush.

Painty groaned. "You heard that?"

"It's ok!" Bottle grinned. "I like being goofy, and acting like I'm 'not all there.' Otherwise, I wouldn't do it!"

"Well, good game, Bottle," Lightbulb said. "I daresay I underestimated

you."

Paintbrush smiled as Bottle and Lightbulb shook hands, but the smile melted off their face when they looked at Taco. They quickly regained their composure, though. "Sorry... I know you explained how you're not the Taco that we know, but I still get the creeps whenever I look at you."

Taco waved it off. "It's fine. Now, how about we play some Go Fish?"

"You want to go fishing?" Lightbulb asked. "Oh, you mean the card game. I love that game! I'm great at it."

"I'm pretty good too. I bet I'm better than you," Taco countered.

Lightbulb squinted her eyes in order to make herself look intimidating. It didn't work. "Oh yeah? Name your bet."

Taco grinned. She had exactly the bet in mind.

A bit of a shorter chapter this time

To be honest, I wasn't sure how to write the interaction between Suitcase and Clock, but I think I did a decent enough job

The Next Contests

Fan and Tennis Ball emerged from Golf Ball's factory into the fading sunlight. Objects were starting to gather around Four, waiting for him to say something. But he simply had a blank look on his face.

Once everyone had arrived, he began to speak. "CONTESTANTS! I've brought you all here today to start the next challenge."

In the back of the crowd, Barf Bag shouted, "What about the people who were sucked through the portal?"

"I'M GETTING TO THAT!" Four regained his composure. "It appears that those 16 unlucky contestants were taken to another universe - one of many that exist parallel to our own, but unseen by us." People started to murmur amongst themselves. "Each team has at least one member trapped in the alternate universe. So the contest is to get your team members back!" The murmurings grew louder. "The last team to do so will be up for elimination. Begin!"

People started to disperse and re-coagulate into their respective teams. A Better Name Than That crowded around Tennis Ball and Fan.

"So, do we have any ideas on how to get Golf Ball and TV back?" Basketball asked.

Blocky responded first. "I vote we just leave GB in the other universe."

"Blocky!" TB shouted. "We can't just do that, we'd lose! Besides, she's my friend!"

"I hate to break it to you, TB, but have you noticed that basically *nobody* else likes her?"

"Actually," Fan butted in, "Golf Ball is quite popular with the viewers."

Blocky stared at him. "Are you being serious? Bossy bot Golf Ball is *popular?"*

"Yup! I gotta say, though, you don't have many fans yourself, Blocky. If you guys are up for elimination again because of something you suggested-" Fan slid a finger across his throat. "-you may be in trouble."

"Hmm. That is risky." Blocky put his hand to his chin, like he was thinking. "Well, back to Basketball's question. Even if we wanted to get GB back, how would we do it?"

Tennis Ball answered, "We could use her factory to build a machine to open another portal. I had actually started working on one before Four called us all up here."

"Grassy LIKES that plan!" Grassy chimed.

"Then it's settled," said Basketball. "We build a machine to get Golf Ball and TV back, but only to avoid elimination. Sound good?"

"Yeah!" Grassy, Blocky, and Robot Flower said in unison. As the sun set, they all headed towards the factory entrance, with Tennis Ball lagging behind, looking slightly crestfallen.

Fan decided to try to cheer him up. "Hey, if it's any consolation, you're pretty popular, too. If you guys *do* lose, there's a good chance that both you and GB will survive."

Tennis Ball smiled at Fan. "Thanks."

"How in the world are we supposed to do this challenge??" Snowball complained loudly. "We only have four members! And it's not like getting to another universe is *easy!"*

"Well, at least we're not... *BEEP."* Bubble whispered that last part and pointed in Cloudy and Woody's direction. "They only have two

people!"

"Guys," Lightning spoke, "I think I may know a way to get to that other universe."

Bubble, Fanny, and Snowball all turned towards Lightning. "Well?" Snowball asked expectantly.

"There's this cave that may be able to help us. But it's several miles away, and it'll take a couple days to get there. I'll explain on the way."

Lightning floated away. Bubble followed him, but Snowball and Fanny didn't. "I HATE walking!" Fanny exclaimed.

"Are you ready, TV?"

TV nodded. He was plugged into the fuse box for Test Tube's laboratory via several wires. Test Tube pressed the main power button for the fuse box. TV shorted out, and several of the wires sparked, but after a moment, the lights in the laboratory flickered on.

"Yes!" Test Tube punched her fist into the air in celebration. She flipped a few switches in the fuse box and started directing power back to TV. Now that they had jump-started the backup generator (which, ironically, couldn't start without an external power source), all she had to do was keep TV plugged in for an hour or so until he was fully charged again.

Test Tube walked over to her computer and pressed the power button. Hopefully nothing had been lost. The Meeple logo appeared on the screen, and after two minutes of intense loading, the computer turned on fully. Test Tube opened the folder with her notes on the time travel project and breathed a sigh of relief. Everything was there.

"Whoa. What the heck happened here?"

Test Tube turned around to find MePhone standing in the hole in the wall that had become the new entrance of the laboratory. He

surveyed the damage, his eyes lingering on TV, then chuckled. "I always knew one of your experiments would go awry someday. But I never knew that it would cause THIS much damage!"

"Hey!" Test Tube spat angrily. "I'll have you know that while my original experiment may have failed, I have accomplished something that-"

"Yeah, yeah, yeah," MePhone interrupted. "Anyway, it's elimination time. Bring your otherworldly buddy and let's go!"

MePad entered the hole in the wall. "Sir, nobody lost last challenge, remember?"

"Oh yeah. Well then, it's contest time. Come on!" MePad teleported himself and MePhone away. Seconds later, Teardrop and Golf Ball returned. "Who were they?"

"They were the hosts of Inanimate Insanity." Test Tube turned off her computer. "I gotta go compete in the next challenge. MePhone said to bring you guys along."

"But what about creating the portal?" Golf Ball spluttered.

"Look, as much as I want to fix my machine as you do, it's getting late. Makes me wonder why MePhone is even doing a challenge this late in the day, but either way, we can't ignore his summons. Besides-" she knocked on the side of her computer. "-it turns out that my files are fine! So we won't have to start from scratch."

GB sighed. "Well, I guess it could be nice to actually spectate a show instead of being in one." She turned to Teardrop. "TD, what about-" But Teardrop was already gone, climbing out of the rubble and into the setting sun. GB and Test Tube followed her, leaving TV to recharge.

Baseball was looking for Nickel when he heard voices in the trees. Turning towards the forest, he pushed aside a bush and saw the telltale glint of silver. "Hey, Nickel! I've been looking for you. MePhone wants us for the next challenge-" He stopped as he realized

that there wasn't one Nickel, but two. He looked back and forth between them for several seconds, his confusion growing with each turn of his head.

"...did Lightbulb put something in my Dr. Fizz?"

Hiya, sorry that this chapter is both shorter than usual *and* took long to make, but I'm trying to finish up my schoolwork (yes, I've still got school online, despite the quarantine). I finish on Tuesday, though, and I have lots of stuff planned for this story, so stay tuned!

Sabotage

Test Tube, Golf Ball, and Teardrop arrived at the contesting grounds next to the lake at sunset. Most of the Inanimate Insanity contestants were already there, except Fan, of course, and Marshmallow. Microphone was also missing for some reason. Some of the BFB contestants were there, too - everyone except TV, Leafy, Donut, Gelatin, and Fries.

BFB Taco was hiding behind Lightbulb. Test Tube suddenly realized that Lightbulb had somehow managed to get herself stuck, upside down, in Bottle. "How in the world...?"

"I lost a bet," Lightbulb responded. She coughed up a feather. "A few bets, actually."

MePhone looked around at the large crowd. "Wow, there's more of you alternate universe people than I expected."

Flower elbowed Knife. "Told ya." Knife just rolled his eyes.

"But the more, the merrier!" MePhone continued. "You guys can watch as my contestants compete. Speaking of which, today's challenge, as chosen by the viewers, is..." He paused for a moment to let the voting results appear on MePad's screen. "...Bucket Brigade!"

His screen turned green, and several objects appeared colored green next to the Grand Slams. An identical set of objects, except in yellow, appeared next to the Bright Lights.

"Since you guys have been getting along *sooo* well lately," MePhone stated sarcastically, "it seems like a no-brainer to have a challenge that can highlight your sense of teamwork." Balloon and Suitcase smiled at each other, but II Nickel frowned uncertainly. "I mean, splitting up in the maze? Well, that was teamwork at its finest."

"Thank you!" Lightbulb said, relieved. "At least *someone* noticed!"

MePhone continued to explain the contest rules. "Oh!" Test Tube exclaimed. "So, it's one of those challenges where the first part's basically arbitrary to the goal."

"Yeah. I *could* give you the balls at the beginning. But really, where's the fun in that?"

"Where's the fun in ANY of this?" II Nickel complained. Baseball chuckled.

MePhone kept going, explaining that the losing team would now vote off their own members, making up for there not being an elimination last time. As II Nickel pulled Suitcase off for a chat and the rest of the II contestants muttered among themselves about this change in the rules, the BFB objects just stood there, unsure how to react. Several of them have never even heard or thought of the contestant voting concept. During all the hubbub, Microphone walked out of the forest and joined the rest of her team.

BFB Taco spotted Microphone and said, "Oh, hey, it's Microphone!"

"You know her?" Paintbrush asked.

"Yeah, she was with me when I encountered the Taco from this universe."

"Wait, wait wait wait. Back up. Our Taco is *here?"*

"Yeah, she's in the forest that Microphone just walked out of. Why?"

Paintbrush lowered their voice. "What exactly did she say to you?"

BFB Taco told them what II Taco had told her. Paintbrush clenched their fists. "You can't trust her," they told Taco. "It's unlikely that she's just spectating."

"What did she do last season that was so bad?" Taco questioned.

Paintbrush didn't answer. They just narrowed their eyes and stared at Microphone from across the grassy plains.

"Did you hear that?" Microphone asked. She had moved away from the rest of her team again so that they didn't overhear her.

"I did," II Taco replied. "Looks like we've got a new target, but we'll have to be stealthy about it. If the Bright Lights lose and Paintbrush is eliminated, they'll spill the beans about us, and then we'll both be in trouble. Stick to the plan - use the temporary paralyzer I gave you to make the Bright Lights lose, but you *have* to make sure to pin the blame on Test Tube."

Mic didn't respond. She still didn't want to use the paralyzer.

"Okay, looks like everyone's in position," MePhone said. A few minutes had passed. Balloon and Lightbulb (still inside Bottle) were waiting at the edge of the dock. Test Tube, Suitcase, Nickel, and Baseball were ready to pass buckets, while Microphone was waiting at the tub to fill it with water. Paintbrush and Knife were standing on the raised platforms in the water-filled tub.

Painty suddenly noticed something. "Wait," they spoke up. "H-has anyone seen Marshmallow?"

"We're ready to begin," continued MePhone, ignoring Paintbrush.

"No, no, no, no, no, no," Paintbrush interrupted, poking MePhone in the face. "Marshmallow isn't even here! And with Lightbulb stuck inside Bottle and Fan trapped in another reality or whatever, we're down three whole members! You can't expect just Test Tube and I to go against six whole Grand Slams!"

Mephone sighed. "Sheesh, aren't you pushy. Is Marshmallow paying Mars a visit again or something?"

"Sir, I've been trying to inform you," MePad replied. "Marshmallow has exited the parameters of the show. But might I suggest that three of the, ahem, *other* objects fill in for them?" MePad pointed with his foot towards the group of BFB contestants.

"Hey, that's a great idea!" He turned to face them. "Three of you guys are needed to help fill in for the Bright Lights this contest."

"I'll join!" Bottle chirped cheerfully.

"As much as I want to try out my new arms," GB said, "I'll pass." Teardrop waved her arms at MePhone, but he didn't notice.

Flower spoke. "What if we don't want to help? It's not like you can eliminate us; we're not even really on your show."

MePhone thought for a moment. "Well, how about this: the team that wins this challenge gets an extra-special prize."

Flower perked up. "In that case, count me in!"

"Me, too!" Ruby high-fived Flower. Some of the BFB contestants looked a little crestfallen that they hadn't spoken up in time. Teardrop looked especially miffed and stormed away to join GB on the bleachers.

Knife groaned. "Not *Flower* again..."

"One last thing," Mephone said. "If Marshmallow's not back by the next episode, she will be officially disqualified and eliminated." He waited a moment for Flower and Ruby to get into position. "Now, I hope everyone's ready!"

Balloon looked very certain. "We are indeed!"

"Awesome! Just making sure. GO!" Mephone raised his right hand in the style of the BFB intro sequence.

As Balloon dropped his bucket into the lake, Ruby ignored hers. Instead, she grabbed Bottle with Lightbulb inside and pushed them into the lake.

"Ruby!! What are you doing?!" Paintbrush yelled.

Ruby quickly fished Bottle, now full of water, out of the lake and carried her over to test Tube. At the same time, Balloon passed his first bucket to Suitcase, who passed it through Nickel and Baseball.

Flower grabbed Bottle from Test Tube and poured the water from her into Paintbrush's tub at the same time Microphone poured her bucket into Knife's tub. The water level in the Bright Lights' tub rose significantly more than the Grand Slams'.

"Oh." Paintbrush smiled. "I get it. In that case, I apologize for yelling at you."

Ruby grinned back and sprinted towards the lake again. Both teams repeated the process until the water level in the Bright Lights' tub was almost high enough for Paintbrush to reach the key. However, the Grand Slams still had a way to go.

"Alright." II Taco spoke in Microphone's mind, startling her. "It's now or never. While Balloon's getting more water, sneak over to Test Tube and zap her."

Microphone took a step, then made a decision. "No. There's got to be a better way than hurting people."

"What?" There was visible frustration in Taco's voice. "There IS no other way! If you don't paralyze Test Tube, your team will lose!" But Microphone had turned down the gain on her back at this point, rendering Taco's ramblings useless. She dropped the paralyzer and began to walk over to Test Tube anyway.

Mic decided to hide behind a bush just next to Test Tube. She could see Ruby heading towards them, a full Bottle in her hands. If that water was poured into the tub, it would probably be enough to let Paintbrush snag the key. She had to act fast.

Ruby reached test Tube and handed Bottle over to her. Flower stuck her tongue out at Knife, convinced that they had already won. But before test Tube could get far, Microphone stuck out her leg. Test Tube tripped and dropped Bottle, who miraculously didn't shatter, but all of the water spilled out.

"Noo!!" Paintbrush yelled. "Test Tube, you klutz!"

"Sorry, sorry!" Test Tube scrambled to get Bottle back to Ruby so she could be refilled.

Paintbrush was about to make another scathing remark when they saw a leg retract from a bush. Seconds later, they witnessed Microphone sneak out and back to Knife's tub. "Hmm..."

Knife watched the exchange as well. Then he looked up at the key and had an idea. He lowered down to a crouch, then leapt upwards with all his might. He barely managed to grab the key from the rope it was dangling from.

"Wh- hey! Knife's cheating!" Flower complained as Knife climbed out of the tub of water.

MePhone thought for a second. "Nah," he decided. "That's fine."

Flower spluttered with rage, but couldn't say anything more as the newly filled Bottle reached her. She poured the last of the water into their tub, allowing Paintbrush to also grab the key.

Knife unlocked the chest and tossed a ball at his team's target, hitting it dead center. The target went "Ding!" and one of the lights turned on.

From inside the tub, Paintbrush threw the key at Test Tube to save time. She caught it and, unlocking the chest, got ready to throw. "Now, let's see, accounting for air resistance and wind speed..." She muttered under her breath for several seconds, giving Microphone time to sneak up behind her.

Finally, just as she was about to throw the ball, Microphone stuck her hand out of another conveniently-placed bush and tapped her on the shoulder. "Ahh!" This startled Test Tube, causing her throw to be way off-center. The ball barely missed the target.

"Test Tube! What was that!" Paintbrush complained. "That's the second time you've screwed up this contest!"

"Someone distracted me!" Test Tube complained back.

Meanwhile, Balloon threw another ball at the Grand Slams' target, but he missed. "Oh no!" He quickly grabbed the third ball and tossed it, this time hitting the target. Another light lit up. "Phew." Knife went to get the ball that got thrown past the target.

"Oh no, now we're super behind!" Paintbrush was starting to panic.

"Don't worry, sisters." Even though she was stuck inside Bottle, Lightbulb sounded confident. "I've got a way to fix this. Pass me a ball!"

"What??" Painty was outraged. "The only way this could be worse is if YOU tried to throw the ball!" But Bottle ignored them and passed a ball to Lightbulb through her top. Lightbulb rubbed it in between her hands, causing electricity to crackle through it. She tossed it upwards (or, from her upside-down point of view, downwards) through Bottle's hole. "Get ready, Bottle!"

Bottle backed up slightly and kicked the ball before it the ground. It shot towards the target and slammed into the center. Electricity zapped the target, causing two lights to light up instead of one.

Paintbrush fainted from shock (the mental kind).

"Hey!" Nickel complained. "That's cheating!"

"Eh, I'm feeling lazy today," replied MePhone. "I'll allow it."

Microphone appeared next to Knife's side. "Finally," Knife grumbled. "You've decided to show up. Now here." He tossed her the last green ball.

Ruby snatched up the last yellow ball for the Bright Lights. "I got this!"

Ruby and Microphone threw their ball at the same time. Microphone's ball started to fall, but she turned her mic on and screamed at it, the sound wave just enough to propel it to the target.

However, Ruby's ball hit the target less than a second before Microphone's did.

"And the Bright Lights win immunity!" MePhone announced. "Their ability to work together pulled through, even with a few new temporary additions to their team."

"Woohoo! We won!" Test Tube cheered.

"Great job!" Golf Ball shouted from the bleachers. Teardrop whistled and Flower lifted Ruby onto her head.

Lightbulb and Bottle stared at Paintbrush, who was still out of it. "I guess we'll have to tell her the good news when she wakes up."

"Mic!" Baseball yelled, annoyed. "We were so close... again! Why couldn't you have just been a little faster?" Microphone looked devastated. She hung her head and, not saying a word, walked off. Baseball stormed off in a different direction.

"Well, it wasn't exactly her fault," Knife said, crossing his arms. "If balloon boy over here hadn't missed his first shot, we would have won." Balloon also looked ashamed, but Suitcase comforted him.

"True..." II Nickel muttered, staring at Balloon.

Knife spotted Suitcase heading off towards the lake and lying down on the grass next to the dock. He was about to go try to talk to her when that weird new Clock guy beat him to it and sat down next to Suitcase. *Maybe later,* he thought.

"It's getting pretty late," MePhone said, watching the sun nearly finish setting. "We'll do the elimination ceremony tomorrow morning. Get some sleep, Grand Slams, and make sure you know who you want to vote in the morning!" He turned towards the Bright Lights and their new additions. "As for you guys... well, I promised a special prize for the winning team. How does a pizza party sound?"

Mentally preparing herself, Microphone gently eased her gain back to full. "Taco?"

She heard a disappointed sigh from Taco's end. *"This* is why I wanted you to use the paralyzer. That sound wave trick was clever, but being passive simply isn't enough to win. Not to mention that you now have a target painted on your back."

"Well, how was I supposed to know Lightbulb could do... *that?"* she countered.

"That's not my-" Taco sighed again. "Look, there's still hope. Knife pointed out to some of your team members that you would have won if Balloon hadn't missed his first shot. If you vote for Balloon, you may just yet survive tomorrow's elimination. But next contest, I want you to actually listen to me."

Microphone turned her gain off again and sighed heavily.

It was nearly midnight when Golf Ball and Test Tube returned to the laboratory. "Man, what a crazy party!" Test Tube exclaimed. "I wish MePhone had let you join in."

"That's ok. I'm not very social anyways."

"Still, I saved you a slice!" Test Tube pulled out a slice of pepperoni pizza.

Golf Ball ate it gratefully. "Thanks."

They reached the lab and climbed through the hole in the wall to find TV on, but still booting up. "Good," GB said, relieved. "I just wanted to make sure he was working."

Test Tube picked up her phone, which she had left on the table, and found out that she had missed 8 calls from Fan and several texts. "Jeez, Fan, no need to go all crazy on me when I don't reply," she muttered under her breath. Then she actually read the messages. "Hey, Golf Ball?"

"Yeah?" Golf Ball turned away from TV.

"I got some texts from Fan. Apparently, there's a new contest for you guys. It's..." She squinted to read the screen. "...to get your missing team members back from the other universe."

GB sighed. "That just makes our work more urgent."

"Hey, you'll be fine! We can sleep tonight and let the other contestants from your universe know about the contest tomorrow. Besides, even if they find out tonight, I'm sure none of them will

suddenly get the ability to travel back."

"I guess you're right... but I'm going to make sure TV boots up fully before sleeping."

Test Tube shrugged. "Hotel OJ should have some vacant rooms, but the grass outside is also incredibly soft and surprisingly easy to sleep on. Plus, you can study the constellations as you relax!"

"Hotel... OJ?" GB questioned.

"Long story. Anyways, I'm going to sleep right outside. See you in the morning!" She waved and headed out through the hole. Golf Ball waved back with her new arms. They still felt so weird...

"Well," GB said to herself, "looks like it's just you and me, TV." She sat down, plucked a random sheet of notes off the ground, and began to read to pass the time, moonlight shining through the hole and shimmering against the box of crystals on the counter.

Woah, a SUPER long chapter! It's partially to make up for the shorter chapter last time, but also because a lot of this chapter's dialogue is recycled from II2 episode 11, and I wanted to have a good amount of my own writing in here.

Also, I'm finally done with my online classes for the year! So the next chapters hopefully won't take too long to write. I think I've managed to plan the rest of it out.

One more thing: the first chapter has almost 150 reads now! And all the chapters combined have almost 700 reads?? Thank you guys for literally just existing and reading my stuff □

An Explosive Suggestion

A ray of sunlight shone through the window shades and hit Gelatin square in the eye, more than bright enough to wake him up. He yawned loudly, stretched, and rolled (literally) out of bed, landing on the floor with a splat.

He sat up and blinked, momentarily forgetting where he was, before remembering the portal and talking to OJ the day before. He looked around at the room OJ had offered him. Absolutely everything was lime green, from the carpet, to the window shades, to the pillows. Gelatin loved it.

As he became more and more awake with every passing second, Gelatin could hear Yin and Yang arguing in the room next to him. He had been put on the fourth floor with them, along with Tissues, Cheesy, Donut, and, until recently, Apple. According to OJ, he had found Apple's window shattered a couple nights ago with no clue of where the dark red fruit had gone.

Gelatin opened his door and slid across the hallway to Donut's room. Knocking on the door, he called out, "Rise and shine, Bagel Brain! Today's a new day!" He heard a groan and decided to leave Donut alone for now.

Gelatin had just reached the stairwell when he remembered something crucial. TV had come by at three in the morning and slid a note under Gelatin's door, letting him know about the new contest Four had issued. He only had to think about it for a moment before getting an idea.

Fries and Leafy were sitting at a table in the dining room, chatting. "So, you actually *like* pineapple on pizza?" Leafy questioned.

"You got any trouble with that?"

Leafy opened her mouth, then paused. "Well, I like oatmeal raisin cookies, so I guess I'm not one to talk."

Before Fries could respond, they heard footsteps. Those footsteps quickly turned into a series of banging and thumping noises as whoever was climbing down the stairs began to fall down the stairs instead. With an anticlimactic squelch, Gelatin slid across the floor (unintentionally this time) face first into the dining room. Something large, round, and grey rolled past him and bumped into a wall out of sight.

"Nice entrance," Fries commented.

Gelatin jumped up, completely unfazed. He was holding his phone. "Hi, guys! Did TV give you a note, too?" They both nodded. "Great! Well, I have an idea on how to get us all safe!

"Wonderful!" Leafy exclaimed.

"What's your idea?" Fries asked, suspicious.

"You remember that there's a Bomb in this hotel?"

"Yeah..." Fries wasn't liking where this was going.

"Wellllllll, if I use Bomb to blow us up-"

"Absolutely NOT!" Fries didn't even let him finish.

"But you didn't even let me finish!" Gelatin complained. "If we use Bomb to blow us all up, Four can recover us back in our own universe, and we'll be safe!"

"I think you need to check your definition of the word 'safe,'" called Salt from the other room.

"Yeah, you tell 'im, girl!" Pepper cheered.

"Uhg." Those two really irked Fries. "Even if you did blow us all to smithereens - which you *won't* - there's no way Four will know to

recover us on the other side!"

"Yeah, Jelly." Leafy had to agree. "Your plan is insane!"

"Relaaaax, I thought of that part," Gelatin countered. He held up his phone. "I've already texted Barf Bag, asking her to tell Four to recover us in about 10 minutes! Besides, we can't let this guy go to waste." Gelatin disappeared from the doorway for a moment, then returned with the round object that rolled by him earlier. It was Bomb, somehow still asleep.

"Now, there's gotta be a lighter in here somewhere..." Gelatin opened a drawer and rummaged around for a moment. "Aha!" He held up a red lighter in triumph.

"Oh no you don't. Give me that!" Fries leapt for Gelatin, but he jumped out of the way. Fries crashed into a chair. Leafy went to intercept the lime jello, but he flicked the lighter on and pointed it at her. She raised her hands in surrender. "Ah! Don't burn me!"

Gelatin maneuvered around Leafy and set the lighter for Bomb's fuse. Fries got up and ran for Gelatin again, but it was too late.

"What the heck is going on here?" Donut and Orange Juice entered the room just in time to see the chaos unfold. They stood there, not quite understanding, watching Bomb's fuse grow shorter and shorter.

OJ put his hand to his face. "I can't deal with this so early in the morning."

"WAKEY WAKEY!" MePhone's voice blared.

"Ah! What! I'm awake!" Suitcase shot to her feet and whipped her head around. Several other Grand Slams were doing the same.

"Ha! Gotcha!" MePhone laughed hysterically. "Oh, downloading that MeGaPhone app was so worth the $5. Come on, Grand Slams. It's elimination time!"

Suitcase frowned. What a dirty trick to play. She looked around. All

of the Slams were awake now, including Clock and Pillow, who were sleeping nearby (at least, until Mephone came along). Her adrenaline gone, Suitcase began to blearily follow MePhone when the ground shook. A bright flash of light and a low rumbling noise came from the general direction of Hotel OJ. "Whoa! What was THAT??"

"Eh, I'm sure it's nothing that concerns us," Knife said. "Let's go."

Suitcase began to walk again, but looked worriedly in the direction of Hotel OJ, where smoke was beginning to rise from.

"Careful, Grassy!" Tennis Ball cried. "That part's hot!"

Grassy quickly moved his hand away from the hot part of the metal and placed his hands on a different section to keep it steady. TB sighed and continued to screw the final bolts in when he heard a faint sound coming from aboveground. Pausing once again, he identified it as the drumroll that usually accompanied someone's recovery. Seconds later, he barely managed to make out Four saying, "Team Ice Cube and Free Food are both safe!"

"Huh?" Fan asked. He and the other members of ABNTT had heard it too. "How have two teams already managed to become safe? It feels weird, not being able to see how it happens for every team."

"Blocky," Basketball ordered, "go see how they did it!"

Blocky nodded and raced towards the stairs. Basketball waited until he was out of sight before walking over to TB and sitting down next to him. "Hey, TB."

"Hi, Baskie." Tennis Ball didn't look up.

A moment passed before Basketball spoke again. "Look... I've got something I need to ask you."

"I'm listening."

"I know that you're a friend of Golf Ball, and I don't want to ruin that relationship. But..." BB paused. "You know she's... not... the nicest to

most other people. I think that's going to have to change." Tennis Ball stopped and slowly turned towards Basketball. "I mean, some of her plans are pretty good. A few times, they've managed to help us. But I think the rest of the team would be more willing to follow her lead if she was kinder. Or, if not kinder, willing to at least listen to other's ideas." Basketball glanced at Grassy, who was humming to himself, not paying attention to the conversation. "So, when GB gets back, can you ask her to... try to do this? Just to try?"

Tennis Ball didn't say anything for a long minute. Then, he gave a small smile. "Sure."

Basketball breathed a sigh of relief. "In fact," Tennis Ball continued, "I'll ask her very soon, because the machine is complete!" He stood up and beamed it proudly, then frowned slightly. "Well, I hope. Anything could go wrong."

"Then let's try it out!" Basketball said enthusiastically.

"Yeah!" Grassy agreed.

TB lifted the machine onto the counter. It was considerably smaller and more lightweight than Test Tube's machine. In fact, it looked suspiciously similar to the wall teleporter they had discovered in the long-lost Yoyle City.

"I'm surprised you managed to make this in less than 24 hours," remarked Robot Flower.

"Well, you learn a lot about science when you hang around Golf Ball. Also, as I said, there's a good chance that it just won't work." Nonetheless, TB plugged it into an outlet, flipped the on switch and pointed the device at an empty wall. It shook dangerously for a second, then projected a beam of light at the wall, which coalesced into a swirling portal consisting of grey and light blue. ABNTT (plus Fan, minus Blocky) stared at it in awe.

Fan raised his phone and snapped a picture. He swiped between the picture of the new portal and a picture of the one that had transported him here. "That doesn't look like the portal that opened yesterday," he pointed out. "It's colored differently, and it's kinda

scribbly around the edges, instead of all smooth."

Tennis Ball quickly tied a rope around his middle. "I'm going to go through and see if that's the right dimension," he said.

"Be careful!" Basketball tied the other end of the rope to a sturdy table. TB slowly inched into the portal and vanished. Unsure if he would return, Basketball and Fan held their breath. Robot Flower would have held her breath, if she needed to breathe. Grassy, however, just said, "Ooh! Pretty lights!" and followed Tennis Ball into the portal before anyone could stop him.

Tennis Ball emerged from the colorful vortex, fully expecting to be blinded by sunlight. However, it was dark outside. Nighttime. But the surrounding area was lit up by starlight and moonlight, so he could see pretty well.

He turned his head to see where he was. He was on a grassy plain with a forest in the distance. Through the trees, he could see the glimmer of water. A lake? A pond? There was also a brick building in the center of the field. But the most astonishing part of the terrain was that the whole thing was surrounded by a giant, glass dome.

He turned again to see two objects staring at him. One appeared to be a holly berry - red with two green leaves poking out the top - and the other was some sort of pastel blue book. Weirdly enough, it was the same shade of blue as the portal. They had an image of four crayons on their front cover, as well as three letters: *"OSO."*

"Ummm..." the holly berry said. They sounded female, but Tennis Ball knew that meant nothing. "Can we help you?"

"Have you seen a golf ball come through here? About yay high?" He raised his left foot to indicate her height.

Both objects shook their heads. The book spoke up. "The only sports ball around here is Paintball, and she's smaller than that."

But before anyone could say anything else, Grassy came through the portal with a soft *pop*. He spotted the unfamiliar objects

and immediately said, "Yay! New friends!" He ran over, presumably to hug them.

"Grassy!" TB tried to run after him, but got yanked back by the lack of slack on the rope. He quickly untied it and rushed over to Grassy, not noticing the rope slide back into the portal behind him.

"Grassy!" Basketball cried. She almost ran into the portal after him, but stopped herself.

"He'll probably be fine," Fan reassured her. "He's got Tennis Ball with him."

The rope suddenly went taut and yanked the table forwards an inch.

"He's pulling on the rope. That means he probably wants us to pull him back!" Beginning to panic slightly, Basketball yanked on the rope, fully expecting resistance. It did not come. Instead, the end of the rope fell through the portal without TB attached to it.

Basketball stared at the rope uncomprehendingly. "What?"

It was at that moment when the portal device sparked and started to emit smoke. The vortex closed, Tennis Ball and Grassy trapped on the other side.

Escape!

Test Tube yawned and sat up from her bed of grass. It was a new day, and she felt ready for anything. Popping the cork out of her top - she wore that when she slept so her liquid didn't spill - she got up and climbed down the rubble pile into her laboratory.

She gasped. Besides the various holes and cracks in the walls and floor, everything was clean and organized. The shelves had been set back up, and all her notes that didn't get sucked away were arranged neatly on them. The last of the dust had been swept away, as well as all the shards of glass. All the rubble was gone. Every surface had been polished and shone like new. Even her swivel chair, which had been chopped in half by a steel girder, was somehow patched up with duct tape.

In the middle of the room was Golf Ball, standing proudly. "I, uh, couldn't sleep," she said, almost sheepishly. "So I decided to finish cleaning up the lab."

Test Tube's eyes shone and she ran over to pick up and hug Golf Ball. "Oh, thank you, thank you!" Not having hugged anyone before, Golf Ball wasn't sure what to do back, so she awkwardly patted Test Tube's back with a robotic arm.

Test Tube set her down again. "This is great! Not only does it save us a ton of time to fix my portal device, but now my OCD won't be acting up while we're working!"

"Well, there are a couple things I didn't touch," Golf Ball admitted. "I left your computer alone, as well as the actual machine that opened the portal. You'll need to show me how that works." A spark fizzed from the machine as she said that. "I also wasn't sure what to do with the tree."

They both turned to stare at the tree embedded in the wall. "Eh, we'll

deal with that later."

GB turned towards the machine. "So, fill me in on how this works."

"Well-" Test Tube was interrupted by her phone ringing on the counter. She checked the caller ID and answered, putting it on speakerphone. "Hey, Fan! I saw your texts last night."

"Good, because we've got other problems now," Fan answered. "Tennis Ball and Grassy got trapped in a whole other universe!"

"WHAT!?" Golf Ball shrieked.

Fan explained what had happened an hour ago. Blocky had come back down into the factory to find Fan freaking out, Basketball furiously flipping the on switch over and over again, and Robot Flower trying to calm them down. Blocky managed to settle everything, and Basketball began to tinker with their device, trying to see if they could fix it.

"When I was learning about Robot Flower in episode 7, and fixing her last episode, I learned some stuff about machines," Basketball called out. "I think - and hope - it should be enough to get this working again."

Fan turned on the camera so Test Tube and GB could see what was happening. "Can we name this thing?" Blocky asked Basketball from out of view. "I'm tired of just calling it a 'machine.'"

"How about we call it a portal gun?" Fan suggested, thinking about one of his favorite puzzle games.

"Sounds good to me."

Test Tube thought *hmm*. "Then I say we call the portal machine I created a portal *cannon*, since it's considerably bigger than yours."

Blocky came into view and shrugged. "You do you."

"I think it's working!" cried Basketball. Fan shoved Blocky out of the way to see that the portal gun was shaking. Not as violently as the first time, but more like a vibration. Once again, it shot out a portal,

but it wasn't anything like the first two portals. The edges were angular, with no curves whatsoever, and the swirls were colored dark blue, with light blue mixed in.

"Is that it?" GB asked.

Although they couldn't see it, Fan frowned. "That's definitely not the right-" He was cut off as something brown and grey hurtled out of the portal and slammed into him. "Ack!" They heard some scuffling, the sound of a portal closing, and wood breaking. The call ended.

Test Tube and Golf Ball stared at the 'call ended' screen for several seconds before GB's mind shut down from shock and exhaustion. She fainted.

As Basketball tinkered with the portal gun, Fan brought his phone closer, and she could hear the voice of, supposedly, Test Tube filter over to her. "...portal *cannon*, since it's considerably bigger than yours."

"You do you," Blocky responded, just as she connected the last two wires. She didn't realize that the on switch was set to 'on,' though, so it began to vibrate without warning.

She dropped it on the table. "I think it's working!" The portal opened, a different color than what they were expecting. Sure, it was blue, but the wrong shade of it, and it wasn't round like the other portals. She heard Fan murmuring to Golf Ball when something sped out of the portal. It rammed into Fan, who was next to the table holding the portal gun, and snapped off two of the wooden legs. "Ack!" Fan yelled, dropping his phone. The portal gun fell off the table, but Blocky leapt forwards and caught it miraculously. The portal closed a moment before Fan's phone his the ground, cracking a corner and shutting it off.

All of this happened in the span of two seconds.

The ultra-fast being that had exited the portal stopped at the base of the stairwell, allowing them a good look at the figure. "Dora!"

Basketball gasped.

Dora turned to look at her. "Dadadadada!" (FREEDOM!)" With another inhuman burst of speed, she shot up the stairs to the surface.

Blocky got up and stared at the spot where she had disappeared. "How...?"

"We must have opened a portal into the EXIT," Robot Flower theorized.

"What about the machine?" Basketball asked worryingly.

Blocky checked it out. "Looks fine to me."

Basketball sighed and visibly relaxed. "Phew. Now all we have to do is figure out how to get to the *right* dimension..."

"Ah, man!" Fan complained. They all turned to look at him. He held up his phone, which now had two cracks in the screen and a chipped corner, and it wasn't turning on. "My phone's broken!"

Blocky stared at him. "Really? *That's* what you're worried about right now?"

Suitcase trudged back to the lake. She stared at the edge of the dock, considering whether she should sit there or lie there.

"Hey."

Suitcase turned, and there was Clock, looking concerned. "You look even unhappier than when we first met yesterday." *That was yesterday?* Suitcase thought. *That felt like much longer.* "What's up?" Clock continued.

Suitcase sighed heavily and decided to just lay down there, in the sand. "Well..." She explained what had happened in the elimination. How Balloon got the most votes, and how she stood up to Nickel, and how it turned out it was actually a double elimination, with Nickel also going bye-bye.

Suitcase closed her eyes and breathed out. They were both silent for two full minutes. Then, Clock said: "I think you did the right thing."

Suitcase opened her eyes. "Huh?"

"To me, it sounded like Nickel was a pretty toxic person. You've managed to cut your ties with someone toxic. That's good." Clock's expression hardened a little. "I've met some toxic people myself."

"Your team?"

"No, no. Different situation." He thought back to BFB 1.

Suitcase sat up. "But what about my alliance?"

"Alliance, shmalliance. There was an alliance in the first season of the show I'm competing in, ten years ago. I wasn't there at the time, but I've seen the clips. The effects of that alliance... it's still tearing people apart. One person in particular." Bubble crossed Clock's mind.

He saw that Suitcase wasn't looking much better, so he switched tactics and sat down. "But, I guess it all depends on the people in the alliance. Or, to quote from what you said Knife said, 'what *is* an alliance to you?' To you and your other alliance members, if an alliance is to stick together as a group of *friends,* rather than simply *allies,* then that seems good to me. Sometimes an alliance member wants to talk to a person outside the alliance. If the other members are truly ok with that, then it's more than just an alliance." He stopped. "Does that... make any sense to you?"

Suitcase looked down. "I'm... not sure." She looked back out towards the lake. "With Balloon gone, and Baseball likely hating me now, I'm not really sure of anything." She was silent for another moment, then smiled a little. "But knowing that someone here is trying to cheer me up... that helps some."

Clock smiled back. Together, they watched the clouds slowly roll by in the sky.

After a moment, Clock thought of something. "Wait, You said that Balloon got three votes, and Nickel got two. If there's six people on your team, who got the last one?"

"Microphone."

"Oh."

"Did I hear something about Microphone?" said a voice behind them. Suitcase and Clock turned to see Paintbrush looming over them. "Because I've discovered a little detail about her that I think you may want to know."

Despite the fact that it was dark out, Tennis Ball felt like it was still early afternoon. *I guess the time between different universes isn't quite the same,* he thought.

He and Grassy were diligently waiting by the spot the portal had appeared, in case it opened up again. The holly berry and the book, aptly named Holly and OSO Novel, were still there, and a few other objects had come to see them too - specifically Sippy Cup, Diamond, and Paintball. (Tennis Ball had determined that she was, indeed, not Golf Ball.)

Nobody was talking. It was an awkward silence that had lasted a good hour now, after they exchanged stories. Thankfully, it didn't last forever. Sippy Cup pointed and said, "Look!" as the portal materialized again, in the exact spot it had been in before.

Tennis Ball jumped up in excitement. "Yes! They did it!" He gently nudged Grassy through the portal, who was napping, then turned to the five objects watching. "Er, thanks for being hospitable during my short stay!"

They waved. Hoping that the portal didn't close while he was halfway through, TB jumped into the swirling vortex. They both vanished.

Silence lasted for only a moment before Diamond spoke up. "Agree to never speak of this again?"

The other four objects agreed. They headed back to the building in the distance.

Woooooo, boy, that chapter was a mix of everything. I got really tired of typing the world "alliance" lmao

If the next chapter (or maybe the chapter after) comes out as I hope it does, then things are about to get real hectic :)

Crystalline Chaos

It had been a week since Test Tube opened the initial doorway into her universe. She, Golf Ball, TV, and Teardrop had been diligently working on the portal cannon to get it working again. On the other side, Fan and the remainder of ABNTT had also been attempting to get *their* portal device to open up to the correct dimension. So far, they hadn't had any luck.

"Well?" Fan asked as Tennis Ball stepped out of the newly-made portal for what seemed like the millionth time. In the background, Grassy was doodling something on a piece of paper.

"Still not the right place," TB sighed, exasperated. "This one wasn't even like Earth - there was almost nothing but an endless yellow-white gradient, as far as the eye could see. And the few objects who were there were ruled by some green triangle called 'Oodle the Doodle.'" TB untied the rope around his middle. "I'm getting really tired of this."

"Me too," Basketball said. "The fact that we're unable to reach the one place we're trying to go seems off.."

Blocky shrugged. "Well, aren't there an infinite number of universes or something? It could take forever to open a portal to the correct one."

"Thanks for the confidence boost," Robot Flower said sarcastically.

"I'm just sayin'!"

TB walked over to where Grassy was lying and looked over his shoulder. "Whatcha drawing there?"

Grassy proudly presented his drawing. It consisted of all the countless portals that had opened up in the underground factory during the

past week.

TB smiled at him, then silently sighed again when Grassy turned away. *Where are you, Golf Ball?* he thought.

The sport globule in question was currently just about to test the portal cannon. "Ready?" she called to Test Tube, safety goggles on her face.

"Ready!" Test Tube called back. Teardrop, who was standing in the back of the room with TV, gave a thumbs up. Golf Ball yanked downwards on the large lever that was attached to the side of the cannon while Test Tube typed in the coordinates to GB's factory on her computer. The machine began to hum, quietly at first, but it quickly grew louder. It vibrated gently, and electricity began to crackle around some parts of it. Finally, after a few seconds of noise, the machine shot out a beam of light, which began to coalesce into a swirling portal.

"Yes!" Golf Ball cried. Test Tube did a fist pump, and TD smiled.

But the lights in the lab flickered, then went out. The cannon shut down, and the swirls of light quickly dissipated. "No, no no!" Test Tube cried. She ran over to the fuse box, opened it up, and began flipping switches. Nothing happened. "How could the power short out *again?"*

TV turned his screen brightness to full so that he illuminated the room. Test Tube sat down on the ground and put her face in her hands. Golf Ball walked over to her, but before she could say anything, a new voice rang out. "This place is cool!"

Everyone turned their heads to look at the hole in the wall. Pillow, the new arrival, was moving her eyes everywhere in awe to take in the lab. "You know, I'm something of a scientist myself, and I must say, I like this lab. What are you guys doing in here?"

"That's confidential!" Golf Ball barked. "Now, if you'll excuse us, we have a laboratory to jump start."

Pillow didn't say anything. Her eyes flicked over to the box of crystals on the counter, then stopped. She fixed her gaze on it. "Hey... I've seen these before. They were in your factory, Golf Ball!"

GB went through several emotions at once. Anger came first, when she heard that Pillow had invaded her factory, but curiosity of what Pillow meant overcame the anger, and finally, curiosity gave way to realization.

She gasped. "You're right! Those crystals WERE in my factory before! But they vanished." All the emotions above suddenly disappeared, replaced by confusion. "Wait. *How* are they here?"

Test Tube wiped her face and glanced at the crystals. "Oh, those? I just found those in a field one day. They were all inside that box, but it had been tipped over. One of them has a large crack down the middle."

Golf Ball thought hard. "If those crystals are indeed the ones from my universe... I found them in a cave during my explorations, between seasons. I harvested them and brought them back to my factory and stuck them in a box. The next day, Tennis Ball clumsily knocked them over. We heard one shatter, but when we checked under the table to see where they had fallen... poof. It was like they were never there." She paused. "None of them had cracks..."

Pillow put two and two together. She picked one up, surprised by its lightness. It was the one with the large crack down the middle. Test Tube, trying to put the pieces together herself, didn't even scold her for picking it up. "I wonder..."

Taking both ends of the crystal with a different hand, Pillow started to bend it. Test Tube finally snapped out of her reverie. "Hey! Put that back!" But Pillow had already snapped it in half. The loud *crack* echoed around the room, crisp and sharp.

Nothing happened for a second. Pillow felt foolish. But then, without warning, the crystal glowed with an intense light. It sucked Pillow into the crack, then collapsed into itself and vanished.

Nobody spoke for several seconds. Teardrop's mouth was hanging

open from shock. Suddenly, Pillow popped back into existence, just like that. The crystal was in her hand, and now it had three large cracks in it. But it began to crumble into little crystal shards and, as they watched, the shards turned into dust, then the dust glimmered and stopped existing.

Pillow broke the silence. "That... that crystal took me back to BFB. Oh, this is incredible! I've got to get to Bottle!" She nabbed another crystal - this one was perfectly intact, with no cracks - and dashed out of the hole.

Everyone else stood there for another five seconds before saying anything. "A... amazing!" Test Tube stuttered. "These crystals somehow have the ability to transport oneself between realities! I can't believe this is real. This *naturally occurring substance* exceeds all expectations of matter in the multiverse! So much information can be gained from this!" She was almost starting to hyperventilate.

Golf Ball was ecstatic, too. "And with these, we don't even have to fix the machine! We can simply crack a crystal open and be done!" She reached for a crystal, but Teardrop tackled the box, football-style, and dashed towards the exit, sticking her tongue out at Golf Ball.

"What!" GB spluttered. "TV, stop her!"

TV jumped towards Teardrop, but she dodged past him and ran out through the exit. TV fell on the ground and cracked his screen on a rock. Test Tube just stood there, frozen with shock from everything happening at once, while TD sped away. "AFTER HER!" Golf Ball screeched. She and TV ran through the hole. After a moment, she stood up and was about to head after them when her foot kicked something.

Looking down, it appeared to be some sort of fortune cookie. She picked it up and examined it, frowning, then remembered the crystals. Setting it on top of her monitor, she sped off to follow everyone else.

Bottle was relaxing next to a tree. Lightbulb, still upside down inside

of her, was chatting with Taco when Pillow came running over. She stopped and placed a hand on the tree to support herself, panting heavily.

"Whoa, Pillow, are you ok?" Taco asked. Pillow held up a finger, took a deep breath, and quickly explained the crystal she was holding.

"Those crystals sound pretty neato!" Lightbulb said when she was done. "Can I have one?"

"No, I only have one, and I'm using it to get back to our universe," Pillow huffed.

"Can I come?" Taco asked.

"Sure!"

"Yay for friendship!" Bottle exclaimed. She and Taco each laid a hand on Pillow as Pillow prepared to snap the crystal in half. Something occurred to Taco. "Wait, what about Teardr-"

CRACK. The crystal, now in two pieces, glowed with a brilliant light and warped Taco and Pillow into its core. The crystal itself vanished. However, Bottle and Lightbulb were left behind.

Bottle looked confused. "Was that supposed to happen?"

From behind a nearby bush, Teardrop watched all this happen. Distracted, she didn't notice Rocky coming up behind her and swallowing two crystals for himself, then walking off. There were only two crystals left for Teardrop.

Satisfied that Taco had made it back, she turned and did a double take. She could have sworn there were more crystals in the box, but oh well. TD grabbed one and broke it in half, transporting herself - as well as the box - back to BFB.

Pillow and Taco appeared from thin air right next to Four, who jumped, then settled down. "Where did you two come from?"

"The land of Inanimate Insanity!" Pillow replied.

"Cool story. But neither of your teams are safe yet. You're both still missing a member!"

Pillow turned, realizing that Bottle had not come with her. She examined the crystal, which now had a single crack down the middle. "Interesting. Perhaps these are only powerful enough to teleport two objects at a time?"

Taco began to panic. "Teardrop is still on the other side. How will she get back?"

TD, along with her two crystals, suddenly popped into existence a few feet away. Taco relaxed. "Oh. Phew."

"Gimme those!" Pillow grabbed a crystal from the box, leaving only one, and teleported back to II.

Four noticed that Teardrop had appeared. "[8 names at once] is safe! That means that three teams have survived... but there are still five teams in danger!"

SAFE:
Team Ice Cube!
Free Food
Gabop/Bleh/[8 names at once]/whatever the heck you'd like to call it

NOT SAFE:
Death P.A.C.T.
A Better Name Than That
The Losers!
iance
BEEP

Things just got crazy, heh. They'll get crazier.

I'm gonna try out a new story soon, the first chapter will probably be published in a day or two, cause this story is nearly finished. (I estimate there will be 3 or 4 more chapters.) Stay tuned!

Speaking From Your Heart

In a burst of light, Pillow reappeared right next to Bottle and Lightbulb. Bottle jumped. "Aah! Don't do that!"

"Sorry Bottle! But I've got a way to get us home." Pillow tossed Bottle a crystal, who caught it, then cracked her own open and teleported home. Bottle inspected her crystal for a moment.

"Well? Whatareya waiting for?" Lightbulb asked. "Break it!"

Bottle gripped the crystal, bending it until it snapped open. It glowed and sucked both Bottle and Lightbulb in. It felt like they were being squeezed through a tube that was an inch wide, but somehow, without any pain. The feeling lasted for several seconds. Both of them had their eyes closed the whole time. They didn't dare open them.

Finally, they felt themselves being pushed out of something, and they opened their eyes. They were in BFB, with Pillow standing next to them, holding her crystal, which quickly dissolved into dust. Bottle breathed out a sigh of relief at being back home as Lightbulb took in the surroundings. "Nice scenery," she remarked.

"Death P.A.C.T. is safe!" Four announced from a distance.

Something occurred to Lightbulb. "Sorry, glassy gal, but I gotta get back to my own universe thingy." Lightbulb swung herself back and forth slightly, which wasn't easy to do upside-down, but she eventually managed to push Bottle to the ground and shatter her.

"Hey! You!" someone called to Lightbulb. She turned to see some sort of tree walking towards her. He looked mad.

"Uh-oh, time to go." The bulb grabbed Bottle's crystal, which now had a single crack in it, from the ground and inspected it. "Now, how does this doohickey work again...?" Experimentally, she put one end in her

mouth and bit it in half. With the usual flash of light, she vanished before Tree managed to get to her.

Going through the sensation of squeezing through a thin tube once again, Lightbulb reappeared back in her universe. She looked around, then did a little dance in triumph. "Boo-yah!"

Golf Ball and TV arrived at the bush Teardrop was hiding in just as she blinked from existence, and with her, the box of crystals. "Nooo!!" GB cried. She reached out with her mechanical arm at the spot TD was in a moment before, but knew that it was hopeless she was gone.

"I can't believe she just stole that whole box!" she cried. Heavily, she sat down. "She... didn't even care about my apology to her..." TV sat down next to her with a >:(on his cracked screen.

Seconds later, Test Tube came across the depressed duo. She walked up to Golf Ball and patted her on the 'shoulder.' "Hey, it's ok, Golf Ball. We don't need the crystals. We almost got the machine working without them!"

GB sniffed. "I suppose you're right..."

Looking down at the grass, GB didn't notice the sudden flash of light from ahead of them, but Test Tube and TV did. They looked up to see Lightbulb dancing next to a tree with a crystal in her hand. Test Tube brightened and tapped Golf Ball on the head. "Hey. Look."

GB looked up and visibly perked up at the sight of the crystal. She jumped up, ran over to Lightbulb, and wrenched the crystal from her grasp. "I'll take that, thank you very much!"

"Heyo!" Lightbulb complained. "That's mine!"

"Sorry, Lightbulb," Test Tube called over. "We need that to get Fan back."

Lightbulb smiled. "Well then, why didn't you say so? I want to help!"

Golf Ball shrugged. She liked the new feeling of it. "Well, I suppose

we do need something to light up the lab." In the background, TV made another :(for being ignored.

"...and then, after we turned into that room, bars slammed shut behind us, and a bunch of lasers came out of the walls and zapped us!" BFB Nickel and Balloony laughed hysterically. "Oh, laugh all you want," Baseball said. "Well, looking back on it, I guess it *was* pretty funny. But it was terrifying at the time."

Nickel wiped a tear from his eyes, still smiling. "I guess you and the other Nickel are pretty good friends."

"Yeah..." Baseball's smiled faded a little. They both noticed.

"So, uh, you still miss him?" Balloony said.

"Yeah," Baseball said again. "Thanks for hanging out with me, though. Even though you're technically the same objects and remind me of *my* Nickel - and Balloon, I guess - you're still cool people."

"No prob," Nickel replied. Baseball smiled, but BFB Nickel reminded him of II Nickel so much it hurt.

Balloony felt someone bump into his leg. He looked down to see a familiar-looking stone. "Hey, it's Rocky!" Balloony reached down to pet him. "What's up, little one?"

Rocky vomited up the two crystals he had snagged from Teardrop. "Gross!" Baseball stuck his tongue out in disgust.

"What the heck are these?" Nickel asked, picking one up.

Balloony was confused. "And what are we supposed to do with them?"

To demonstrate, Rocky picked up the other with his mouth and bit it in half. "Hey, don't eat that again!" Balloony cried. He ran over to pick up Rocky, but they both disappeared in a flash of light.

Baseball and Nickel were dumbfounded. Nickel looked at his crystal

again. "I, uh, should probably see if I can find them." He turned to Baseball. "It was fun talking! Remember, don't dwell on the other me for too long. You might lose yourself." Baseball nodded, and Nickel used his foot to smash the crystal against the ground. It shattered into several pieces, but still had the same effect. With a burst of concentrated light, Nickel vanished.

Baseball sighed. He was alone, once again...

"Hey, Tennis Ball!"

"Huh?" TB responded through a mouthful of sandwich. He had decided to take a break and have a snack after the last time he went through a portal, and now Fan was running up to him, shouting his name. "I got good news!"

Tennis Ball swallowed and took another bite. "What is it?"

"I got a text from Test Tube." He pointed to his recently repaired phone, which had been broken for most of the week. Everyone on ABNTT was just as glad for it to be fixed as Fan was, since without it, he was going crazy and driving all of *them* crazy. "She said that Teardrop should have a box of crystals that can take you from your universe to mine, and vice versa!"

Tennis Ball almost choked on the last of the sandwich. After coughing for a good ten seconds, he managed to get it down his throat and stood up. "That's great news! Let's go find them before anyone else does."

They quickly climbed up the stairs and heard Four announce "BEEP is safe!" in the distance. After a bit of searching, saw Teardrop's crystal lying on the ground. Tennis Ball pointed to it. "There it is!" Fan raced over and was about to pick it up when someone else got to it first. "Hey!" Fan cried as Leafy took the crystal for herself. "We need that!"

"So do I!" Leafy retorted. "One of my team members is still in your universe, and I've got to get him back."

"Well, we've got *two* members there," Fan said, grabbing the crystal

from Leafy, "so we need it more than you do! Besides, if we let you guys get safe first, then ABNTT be up for elimination!"

"Um, guys?" TB said quietly. "There's still a third team that's not safe yet..." But neither of them paid attention to him.

"You don't understand!" Leafy grabbed the crystal again and pulled it towards her, but Fan kept his grip on it. "The rest of my team has already forgotten Clock once. I... don't want it to happen again. They might forget him forever!"

"Well, too bad!" Fan pulled the crystal towards him.

Leafy pulled back again. "Give that back!"

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"No!"

"Yes!" Fan paused. "Wait."

"Ha!" Leafy wrenched it out of his grasp, but pulled too hard. The crystal went flying from her hands and shattered on the ground behind her. It glowed, then vanished.

TB, Fan, and Leafy stared in disbelief at the spot where it had landed. Fan put his hands on his 'hips.' "Look at what you've done. We'll never be able to use that crystal now!"

The crystal in question reappeared a few feet above the lake in II, and landed into the water with a soft *plop*. Lying on the dock on the other side of the lake, neither Clock or Suitcase saw it sink through the

liquid.

"You know, I've been thinking," Clock started. "It's really nice here, in your universe. Both in terms of landscape and people. And, if I'm being honest, I don't really want to compete in BFB anymore." Suitcase sat up to listen better and Clock sighed. "I mean, a BFDI is a cool prize, but is it really worth it? How much of a chance do I, an armless contestant, have against 51 others?"

"What are you saying?" Suitcase was curious to hear what came next.

"I think I want to stay here. I wouldn't have to have the stress of competing, or being with my idiotic team. The one person we formed our team around is eliminated, anyway, so there's not too much of a point to that anymore. And also..." He looked at Suitcase. "You're one of the nicest people I've ever met."

Suitcase smiled. "That's really sweet! Although, I wouldn't doubt yourself on the armless thing - Baseball and I have both made over halfway through our competition now, somehow." Her smile shrunk a little. "But it's your choice on whether you want to stay... or leave." Her voice suggested that she would prefer the former.

"I'll think about it. But I'm pretty sure I'm going to stay." They both smiled and lay down again, peacefully looking at the sky.

SAFE:
Death P.A.C.T.
Team Ice Cube!
Free Food
BEEP
Gabop/Bleh/[8 names at once]/whatever the heck you'd like to call it

NOT SAFE:
A Better Name Than That
The Losers!
iance

We're in the endgame now hehe. Only one more chapter left!

***(shameless plug in process)* While you're waiting, maybe check out the prologue to my new story? I'd link it here but Wattpad doesn't allow links in stories, apparently. :(It's on my page though**

See you guys next chapter :)

Doorways

"I'm BOOOOOORED," Snowball complained.

Fanny looked at him. "Well, you could have gone with Bubble and Lightning, you know! I would have gone with them if-"

"Yeah, yeah," Snowball interrupted. "You would have gone if you didn't hate walking."

"Exactly!"

Snowball sat up and spotted Lightning floating towards them. He was holding a crystal. "Finally!" Snowball yelled at him. "What took you so long?"

"And where's Bubble?" Fanny asked.

"She tripped over a rock and, well, you know." Lightning made a *pop* sound. "Also, I *told* you guys when Four announced the contest that it was several miles away. It took me four days to get there and four days to get back!"

Snowball crossed his arms. "All that for a puny crystal? I'm not impressed."

"Ruby was telling me about various gems and crystals one day, and I remember her telling me about this one. If she was correct, we're able to use it to go to a different universe."

They were silent for a moment. "So," Fanny said, "Ruby has known how to travel between universes all this time and she never told anyone?"

"Well, she *is* trapped in the other-"

"I HATE her!"

Lightning sighed.

"So how do we use the crystal?" SB asked.

Lightning looked at it. "Maybe we have to break it? I'm not sure-"

Snowball grabbed the crystal and threw it against the ground. It shattered into several pieces, when then imploded and vanished with the customary flash of light.

"Heyyy, Flower!" Ruby cartwheeled over to where Flower was sunbathing. "Want me to sing Two Trucks to you again?"

Flower didn't even move when she responded. "Not now, Ruby, I'm sunb- er, I'm photosynthesizing." Then she lifted her head up and took off her sunglasses. "Wait. Is Two Trucks that song that-"

"Yup!" Ruby grinned.

Flower stared at her. "Ruby. Please NEVER sing that song to me ever again."

Ruby's smile melted. "Awww."

Suddenly, something bonked Ruby on the head, hard. "Ow!" She rubbed her head as the hard object clattered to the ground.

Flower took her sunglasses off again. "What's that? And why did it appear from thin air?"

Ruby picked it up and inspected it, but she didn't need to. The answer came to her in an instant. "Hey, I know what this is! It's a multicrystal!"

"Say again?"

"A multicrystal can be used to go from one universe to another," Ruby explained. "I've never seen one before. It's cool!"

"So we can use it to get back to our own competition?" Flower asked

excitedly. "Wait, how do you know what it does if you've never seen one before?"

"Flower, I'm a gem," Ruby bragged. "I know all about other gems and crystals." She knocked on her head.

"Huh. Well, I'll be glad to get out of here. That Knife guy..." Flower shivered. "He gives me the creeps."

"Just put your hand on my head and I'll get us out of here!"

Flower stood up and leaned against Ruby, who started to bend the crystal. "See you never, Slicey Boi!" Flower called out to the empty plains.

Somewhere near Hotel OJ, Knife shuddered.

"Got it!" The crystal snapped in half, sucking Ruby and Flower into its center and shoving them from one universe into another.

Lightbulb, now having turned herself into a light source, led Golf Ball, Test Tube, and TV into Test Tube's laboratory. "Man, this place is really clean and tidy!" she commented, putting her hands on her 'hips.' "You two are total neat freaks."

"Being neat and orderly is essential to becoming a successful scientist!" Test Tube stated.

"Whatever. Anyway, show me to the broken fuse box thing."

"Actually, I think it would be better if you stayed *away* from most of the stuff in here." But Lightbulb had already found the open fuse box. She rubbed her hands together, creating a static charge, and placed them on the controls. "Lightbulb, no!" Test Tube cried.

But the energy was flowing through the fuse box, electrocuting Lightbulb. After a second, the lights turned on.

"Impressive," GB said. She turned to TV. "Can you do that?" TV just shook his head.

Lightbulb gave a weak thumbs up, then collapsed to the floor.

Test Tube picked her up and propped her against the wall. "She'll be fine," she decided. "Now, let's use the crystal to get you guys back home!"

"Wait," GB said. She examined the crystal. "This has two cracks in it."

"So?"

"Pillow used a crystal that had a crack in it - twice. That was the crystal that had already been used once, when Tennis Ball knocked them over in my universe. After the third time Pillow used it, it crumbled to dust. Before it did so, I saw that it had three cracks in it."

Test Tube put the pieces together. "So... each crystal can only be used three times?"

"It seems so," Golf Ball responded. "And this one has two cracks in it, which means it will get TV and I home, but Fan would be stuck with us."

"Hmm." Test Tube put her hand to her 'chin' to think, then snapped her fingers. "Maybe Fan and Tennis Ball found Teardrop's crystals!"

She pulled out her phone and checked her notifications, only to be disappointed. "Oh. Fan said they weren't able to find any crystals, and on top of that, another team is safe. They're called iance? The point is, it's only your team and another team called The Losers that are left."

"Well, this is a dilemma." Golf Ball started to pace around the room. She happened to glance at the portal cannon. She looked at her crystal, then back at the cannon. "Test Tube," she said slowly, "how easy would it be to connect the crystal to this machine?"

"Ready?"

"Ready!"

One hour later, Test Tube was, once again, about to test her portal cannon. She was nervous - what if they hadn't wired up the crystal correctly? What if machine exploded for good this time? What if she would never see Fan again?

But when she looked at Golf Ball, she steeled her nerves. She had a brilliant scientist by her side. Both Lightbulb and TV were there in case the fuses blew again. And if all else failed, Tennis Ball could try to find some crystals in his universe. Maybe they even grew in her universe!

"What are you waiting for?" GB asked, snapping Test Tube out of her thoughts. With only a moment of hesitation, she turned the cannon on. As usual, it began to shake and spark. Then the colored beam shot out, beginning to coalesce into the yellow and pink portal, but this time, the vortex stayed open.

Test Tube checked the readings on her computer screen. "Ok... the portal seems to be stable. We should send something through to check if it's really-"

A green blur leapt out of the portal, startling the four people in the room. It sped past Test Tube and dashed out of the hole in the wall. Tennis Ball appeared in the portal right after the green thing vanished.

"Tennis Ball!" Golf Ball cried. She rushed over and hugged him with her new mechanical arms. "I missed you!" TB wasn't really sure how to respond, considering that Golf Ball almost never showed any form of emotion like this. GB seemed to realize what she was doing and quickly stepped back. "Er- it's good to see you again," she stuttered.

"You too," Tennis Ball replied enthusiastically. "I love your new arms!"

"I know, right? They're incredible!" She turned to Test Tube. "You MUST give me a copy of your notes on how these work."

"Sure, let me go find them." But before Test Tube could search her shelves, something red hurled itself out of the portal and slammed into her. "Test Tuuuuuuuuuuube!"

Test Tube laughed. "Gah, get off me, Fan! It's really good to see you, too." She pried Fan's arms off and stood up. "Let me get some notes for Golf Ball, and I'll catch you up on everything that's happened in the last week."

TV and Lightbulb bounded over to Tennis Ball. "Hello, TB!" TV said.

"Hey, TV! I missed you, too." He looked at Lightbulb. "You must be Lightbulb. I've heard a lot about you and the other II contestants from Fan."

Lightbulb smiled, glad to be recognized. "Same here, except that I heard about *you* guys from Bottle."

"Bottle's got a couple of loose screws," Golf Ball commented.

Lightbulb winked. "Don't underestimate her. She plays Monopoly like a savage."

"Noted."

Test Tube returned with an armful of papers, which she dumped in Golf Ball's arms. "There you go! Notes on how to build another pair, as well as the various functions that you can install."

"Thanks." Golf Ball tucked the papers under her arm, then turned to Tennis Ball. "Oh yeah, who was that green person that came through the portal first?"

TB winced. "It was Leafy. She followed us into your factory, we couldn't stop her. We should probably get going before she gets back, if we want to secure our team's safety."

"Right." GB turned to Test Tube. "Well... I guess this is it. It was an honor working with you." She stuck her free hand out.

Test Tube shook it. "Likewise. But you don't have to act like we'll never see each other again. The portal has managed to stay open and stable this whole time. I can probably reopen it any time I want, and we can visit each other."

"Awesome!" Fan cheered. "I'd love to come see you guys again! Get to

know some of the other contestants better."

"Same here." Tennis Ball said. He turned to Golf Ball. "Anyways, I can't wait to tell you about all the different universes I visited while looking for you, GB. The whole 'object show' concept is actually quite common! And you would not BELIEVE how many of those universes have an 8-Ball in them..." His voice faded as he and Golf Ball walked into the portal. TV displayed a gif of a hand waving, then followed them in. After a few seconds and a couple of keyboard strokes, Test Tube shut down the portal. She, Fan, and Lightbulb stood for a moment, not saying anything.

"Well!" Lightbulb broke the silence. "Let me know when you get that Dr. Fizz machine fixed, Testy. Let's go, Fan!" They both skipped out of the hole in the wall. Test Tube watched them go. "I should really get that hole repaired," she sighed.

Clock was chatting with Knife when Leafy ran up to them, panting heavily. "Clock!" she gasped. "You've got to come with me right now or we might be up for elimination!"

Knife looked back and forth between them. "I'll leave you two alone," he said, and walked away.

Clock waited until he was out of earshot. "I'm sorry, Leafy." He sighed. "But I've already made my decision. I want to stay here."

"What!?" Leafy spluttered. "But- everyone will just- forget you again! You might get eliminated!"

"I don't care," Clock said firmly. "If they forget me again, then that just proves that they're not worth my time. Again, I'm sorry. But I don't want to compete anymore. I've found someone who I can relate to at least a small amount, and unlike the rest of The Losers, she seems to actually be a good friend."

Leafy opened her mouth, then took a deep breath, taking a second to calm down. "Alright," she said at last. "I suppose I can't force you. But I know what it's like to be forgotten about." She frowned. "...sort of.

My point is, I'll come visit often. *I'll* never forget you."

Clock smiled. "I'd really appreciate that."

Typing on her keyboard once more, Test Tube had just shut down the portal a second time, having opened it to let Leafy back to her universe, when she happened to glance up. Until now, she had forgotten about the fortune cookie that somebody had dropped earlier. She still wasn't sure who's it was.

She picked it up and cracked it apart, putting one half in her mouth, then immediately spat it out. "Bleagh." It tasted like cardboard. She pulled out the thin strip of paper - the fortune - from the other half and read it to herself.

Your lucky numbers are 2, 7, 6, and 3.

She groaned and flipped the paper over.

When you least expect it, you will have an adventure, and along the way, you will open many doorways to new friendships.

Test Tube smiled. It wasn't wrong.

Epilogue, I guess

A month had passed since Test Tube had opened the original portal. She opened it often, now, as objects came and went between universes constantly. Leafy visited frequently and had become good friends with both Clock and Suitcase. Clock had officially been eliminated by Four when Leafy told him that Clock wasn't returning. Hotel OJ and Test Tube's laboratory had both been fixed, and a new

Dr. Fizz machine arrived a few days ago, much to Lightbulb's delight. She consumed several sodas and went on a sugar high for 19 hours, then had a sugar crash for twice that.

As for II, Marshmallow was officially eliminated, and the teams had broken up earlier that day. The final 8 were gathered around MePhone, who was ready to announce the next contest. A few people from BFB, Leafy and Clock included, were watching from the bleachers.

Fan, Test Tube, and Lightbulb were all in a group together. Paintbrush was standing next to Suitcase, glaring at Microphone. Suitcase glanced at Clock, who grinned and would have given her a thumbs up, if he had thumbs. Leafy waved at her, and Suitcase grinned back. Knife, Baseball, and Microphone were all standing on their own, and Microphone gulped nervously under the feel of Paintbrush's gaze. Taco had told her not to worry, but she couldn't help it. Paintbrush was a force of nature.

MePhone opened his mouth and began explaining the next contest, which was painting. Mic felt even more nervous at hearing this - there was no way Paintbrush would lose.

MePhone glanced around at everyone individually. "Are you all ready?"

They nodded their heads. "Good. On my mark, start painting. Ready... set..." He paused, and everyone tensed, ready to compete.

"...go!"

THE END

To those that are reading this, thank you all so much for, well,

reading this. It's my first time making a story on Wattpad, and although there are a few things I wish could have come out better, I'm pretty happy with the story in general. And it got almost 2k total views in the end, which is amazing! Thank you again to anyone who read my story, especially those who stayed from the beginning. Maybe someday, I'll update the cover to something better ¯_(ツ)_/¯

Go check out the new story I'm writing, ily all, ok bye :) <3